

# The Listener

and

## B.B.C. Television Review

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### CHICAGO Markets in Waiting

*Roland Berger on East-West trade*

### What the South African Republic Will Mean

*By Mark Prestwich*

### The Challenge of Britain's Expanding Universities

*By Sir Eric Ashby*

### Recent Studies of Venus

*By Patrick Moore*

### Miracle and History

*Antony Flew on David Hume*

### The Resurrection Men

*Christopher Ricks on clichés and metaphors*

### The Gracious Guard

*C. Day Lewis on coincidences*

### The Last Michelangelo

*By Michael Ayrton*

### Wine and the Common Market

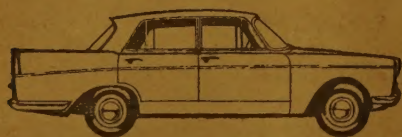
*By Edward Hyams*



Gathering grapes in a French vineyard



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# The Listener

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## Markets in Waiting

By ROLAND BERGER

WE have had good cause, in the last few years, to revise our thinking about the Soviet Union and its technical and scientific progress. Other countries in the so-called Soviet bloc, and China, too, are moving in the same direction even if their achievements have not been so well publicized or, hitherto, so spectacular. Yet the curious thing is that in our trade policy towards Russia and her allies our attitudes are still those of ten years ago. This is extraordinary for a country which is said to live by its foreign trade—and at a time when our share of the world's exports has fallen and is still falling.

For years we have been discussing Britain's relationship with the European Common Market: shall we go in? shall we stay out? The argument still goes on. And all the time our other overseas markets—North America, the Middle East, the under-developed countries, and even the Commonwealth—are proving difficult. Yet there is one sector of the world where markets are constantly expanding: the Soviet Union and its allies in Eastern Europe and Asia, each of them with a planned domestic economy.

All these countries are increasing their industrial output by something like 10 per cent. a year, some more, and some a little less. This is higher than the average of other industrial countries and considerably higher than the world average. Such a rate of growth has meant a growing need for imported plant and technical equipment: and that, in turn, has meant sharp increases in the foreign trade of these countries. From 1958 to 1959, for example, the Soviet Union's foreign trade increased by 21 per cent. in value, Hungary's by 19 per cent., and Czechoslovakia's by 16 per cent. I could recite a long list of mammoth contracts worth any-

thing from £500,000 to £15,000,000 which have been placed by these countries with British manufacturers in the last two or three years. And these gigantic orders do not benefit only a single firm—they involve tens and in cases hundreds of sub-contractors for specialized equipment and they are providing employment for hundreds of thousands of work-people.

Nor is it only complete factories and ships for which the Soviet Union is in the market. As standards of living rise there and elsewhere in the eastern countries, so the demand for consumer goods increases. In the past year our exports to Russia have included large consignments of shoes, women's clothing, and nylons. Although Russia is one of the world's biggest producers of natural furs, she has just bought from Britain £50,000-worth of artificial fur fabric.

Britain has therefore been getting a share of these growing opportunities to export more to Russia and her allies. It is true that our trade with all these countries has been growing over the last few years, but it has not been growing fast enough; we are not yet measuring up to our opportunities in these markets. Our competitors are doing better. Western Germany's exports to these countries are more than twice ours in value. France and Italy, too, have been leaping ahead in the Eastern-bloc markets. Last year French and Italian exports to Hungary and Rumania, for example, were much greater than Britain's.

I think, and many people agree with me, that we are pulling our punches in trading with the Soviet bloc. There is no doubt that our trade suffers from a restrictive and limited government attitude towards it. The government's declared policy is for a



'measured not a dramatic increase' in that trade. But why 'measured'? A measured increase is one which we control and restrict. Why cannot we work for a *dramatic* increase? For here is a rapidly growing market of 1,000,000,000 people—larger than the 600,000,000 of the Commonwealth, twice the size of the market represented by the Nato countries. Are we really serious about our drive for more exports, or are we just content to talk about it? Certainly there is a feeling in industry that the Government may have supported East-West trade in measured phrases but that it has failed to back up those engaged in that trade with a policy—and I stress the word policy—which frankly faces the economic facts of life of 1961.

I know that East-West trade is a subject in which, perhaps inevitably, politics are more closely involved even than they usually are. As a result propagandists have helped to cloud the subject with myths which any businessman with experience of East-West trade knows to be fiction. There is, for instance, the myth that in East-West trade there is more propaganda than trade. When the Russians published 'shopping lists' in 1954 and subsequent years the opponents of increased East-West trade dismissed these as mere propaganda. Luckily, British business men took the Russians seriously and went out and got the business. In many cases Russian orders subsequently placed in Britain were for precisely the sort of goods they had mentioned in their original lists. The textile machinery makers of Lancashire who took orders last year for £9,000,000-worth of equipment to be supplied to the Eastern bloc, and the paper machinery manufacturers who are now working on some £20,000,000-worth of contracts for Rumania, Russia, the German Democratic Republic, and Hungary, would not object to more of this sort of 'propaganda'.

Then there is the myth that East-West trade cannot be depended on because the tap is turned off and on arbitrarily. This cuts no ice with the many British firms who have been trading with the Soviet Union since the early nineteen-twenties, and the many more who have come into East-West trade since the war and are still trading year by year with the greatest confidence. They know from experience that this is one of the most reliable sectors of trade. If the East-West trade tap has been turned off more than once in recent years it was we, not the Russians and their allies, who did the turning. It was we who stopped the shipment of machine tools to Russia for so-called strategic reasons even though the British firm which had actually produced the goods had to dishonour its contract; it was our Government which broke off trade relations with Hungary in 1954 and suspended trade with Czechoslovakia from 1954 to 1956—in neither case for reasons remotely connected with trade. It was we, again, who suddenly imposed restrictions on Chinese goods coming into Britain on the very day on which we liberalized imports from a host of other countries. It was we who refused to allow East German buyers to come here to place orders last autumn although the same people and their orders were welcomed in Western Germany. When this matter was raised in the House of Commons a government spokesman replied that 'it is possible to do business through the post'—surely a stirring motto for our business men who have been urged to get out into the markets of the world and search for orders.

Another myth about East-West trade is that the Soviet bloc have nothing to sell, that they are short of sterling. But in fact these countries all have plans, stretching forward over the next

ten or fifteen years, to increase the volume and the variety of their production and these plans, as I have shown, have already led to a rapid and consistent rise in their foreign trade. This trend is bound to continue if these countries are to reach the economic goals they have set themselves.

So much for the myths. Are there, though, any real restraints on East-West trade? There are—but I believe that we have largely created them for ourselves. Take the embargo on the export of so-called 'strategic' goods. It is my job to know what the countries

of the Soviet bloc want to buy from Britain. I spend a fair amount of my time in these countries to discover exactly what they want to import. I cannot remember a single instance in which any of these countries has even so much as whispered an inquiry for what would normally be regarded as arms or weapons of war. Yet there are still 300 items which cannot be exported to the Eastern bloc. In fact, one of the British concerns exhibiting at the Moscow Trade Fair has found that more than half of the goods it is showing cannot be exported to Russia and the other Eastern bloc countries. The company's

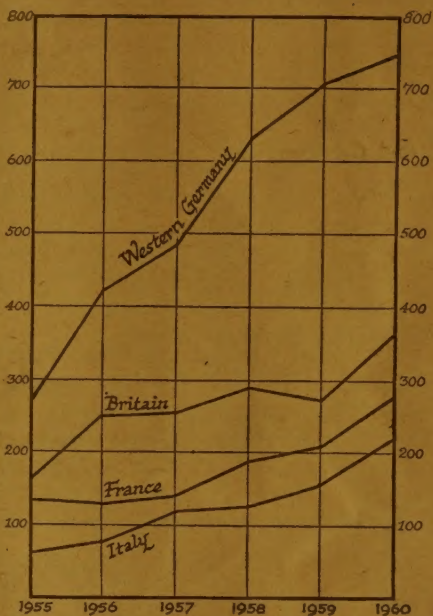
technicians, who know what the equipment can be used for, laugh at the idea that it could have any strategic importance. The fact is that some of our hardest hit industries have suffered from the effects of this embargo. In 1954 the Russians were in the market for a number of ships and they tried hard to place their orders with British shipyards. But they were told that the only ships which could be exported under the embargo regulations were those of low speeds and capacities—in fact outdated vessels. Naturally, the orders went elsewhere.

If exports are vital to this country then East-West trade is vital to our exports. We urgently need to adopt a new attitude to that trade and to reflect that new attitude in a new policy—a policy based on what is economically advantageous to Britain and not related to matters which have nothing to do with trade. Nor should it be a policy dictated from outside by those for whom exports may be of comparatively little importance or by those who are our trade competitors.

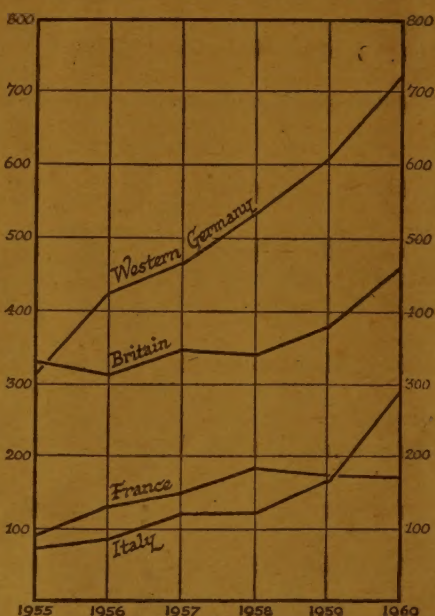
As a beginning the Eastern bloc countries should be given the chance to increase their earnings of sterling by exporting more to us. At present we maintain a discriminatory set of import restrictions against them, although we have twice, in recent years, liberalized imports from our competitors in the European Common Market, in the dollar area, and most other parts of the world. I believe that there is a strong case for allowing imports from the planned-economy countries to come in on the same basis as those from Western Europe, the United States, and elsewhere—for we know from experience that the Eastern bloc countries will use any additional sterling they earn here to buy more engineering and capital goods from us.

Of course, there will always be sectional groups which will ask for protection against increased imports. We have heard a good deal recently about the Polish and Rumanian eggs being sold here. In fact the quantity of eggs we buy from Rumania is an insignificant proportion of our total egg imports, while Polish eggs are almost one of our traditional imports. In the reverse direction our farmers are benefiting from the fact that the Soviet Union and Rumania are becoming some of the biggest buyers of British livestock and breeding cattle.

The fact is that foreign trade always involves a balancing of sectional and national interests. Consider the question of oil



Exports to countries in the Eastern bloc, 1955-1960 (in millions of dollars)



Imports from countries in the Eastern bloc, 1955-1960 (in millions of dollars)



imports from the Soviet Union. Oil is a valuable single import because it produces a high money return which would be used by the Russians to increase their imports from us. The value of Britain's imports of oil is increasing at a rate of something like 15 per cent. a year, and it has been suggested that the Russians should be allowed to sell us one-third of this annual increase, leaving basic imports from other sources untouched. In other words the Russians would sell us 5 per cent. more oil each year, leaving our other suppliers to provide the remaining 10 per cent. more we are importing every year. Balancing all the interests involved, this seems to me to be a reasonable suggestion.

Industrialists and economists in this country have lately been discussing whether it is possible to introduce an element of long-range planning into a free-enterprise economy. The iron and steel industry, for instance, has published a production plan which looks some years ahead. There has also been talk recently of a long-term export plan. In foreign trade, however, there are many uncertainties which make it far more difficult to predict and to plan. Yet in the case of East-West trade we can surely take advantage of the planning of others; for only the Soviet Union and its allies can offer Britain a planned increase of imports and exports over the next seven or eight years and be sure of achieving it. This is the point which Mr. Kosygin, the Soviet First Deputy Prime Minister, emphasized to the delegation from our Institute of Directors which visited Moscow last June. The West Germans have already seen the point. Their recent agreement with the Soviet Union provides for exactly this systematic increase in trade. West German imports of Soviet goods will be stepped up each

year for the next three years. This will allow the Russians to double their purchases of German machine tools, spend four times as much on chemical plant, and spend six times as much as they have hitherto done on the repair of Russian ships in German yards. It seems to me that the results for West German trade will certainly be 'dramatic' rather than 'measured'.

In Western Germany government and business men are partners in the effort to increase East-West trade; but here in Britain it is the business men who have been in the lead. It is they who have been responsible for staging the ambitious Trade Fair in Moscow—the largest ever held there—in which 621 of our firms are exhibiting. And the Russian Fair, which opens at Earls Court in July, will be the largest Fair organized by the Soviet Union in any country. There is no doubt that British business and industry will continue their efforts to increase trade between this country and the Soviet bloc countries where, fortunately, our engineering products and technical equipment are highly regarded. But there is a limit to what can be done without a change in government policy on East-West trade from quasi-negative to positive. I do not mean to imply that more East-West trade will solve all our foreign trade problems. But I am sure that we could rapidly double or even treble our exports to the Soviet bloc, given a change in government policy; and the additional £150,000,000—or £200,000,000—worth of exports that this would mean would make a considerable difference to our balance of payments. How long do we have to wait until Britain can make the most of opportunities which are there for the taking—and which her trade competitors are taking?—*Third Programme*

## What the South African Republic Will Mean

By MARK PRESTWICH

THE inauguration of the South African Republic—an event which entailed the country's departure from the Commonwealth—had not been preceded by the most propitious omens. Demonstrations of protest against the Republic, it was reported, were being prepared. There have been numerous descents by the police on the homes of some known opponents of the Government. The Criminal Procedure Act and the Riotous Assemblies Act, both already exceedingly stringent, were tightened up by Parliament in preparation for the event. This somewhat stormy prelude to the occasion showed beyond doubt its great importance—an importance which is in no way diminished by the fact that the change to republicanism does not (anyway at present) involve any further changes in the structure of government or the relations of its several parts.

To my mind the principal general effect of the change to the status of a republic outside the Commonwealth will be to make the South African state more unstable, but not in the sense of weakening the Government by diminishing its parliamentary or electoral support. My belief that the change will make the state more unstable derives first from the fact

that it is manifestly based on the principle of racial discrimination, at a time when that principle is widely unpopular; and second, from the fact that the new state enjoys the positive support of only a very small majority of the whites, while a considerable portion of the large minority of anti-Republicans continues to regard it with a rooted aversion.

To say that the new Republic is based on racial discrimination may seem, in one sense, a truism. But I do not intend merely to state the obvious fact that the new Republic will practise, like the Union since 1948, the principles of *apartheid*. What I wish rather to do is to draw attention to the exclusion from the republican referendum of the non-Europeans, and more particularly, of the Coloured voters, and to the chief implication of that exclusion.

One need not even be a believer in universal franchise for the normal purpose of choosing legislators to find this total exclusion of non-Europeans from consultation not a little extraordinary. One would have supposed that, in a matter of a change of allegiance, there would at least have been consultation of existing organs of non-European opinion. To any such suggestion, I suppose, a Nationalist



A group of Coloured fishermen at Kalk Bay, Cape Province



might reply that if the Africans and Indians, who now have no vote, were consulted on such a matter, they would expect to be consulted on other matters of legislation too, and that that could in no wise be conceded by a sovereign, all-white Parliament dominated by Nationalists. But such a retort—the validity of which each person will judge for himself—could not be made to any criticism of the exclusion of the Coloured voters of the Cape Province from the referendum. For the Coloured people (or rather the Coloured men) of the Cape have still a limited parliamentary vote although, of course, they must elect white representatives and are not included in the same constituencies as Europeans. Still, they are officially certified, so to speak, as fit to play, indirectly, a small part in the government of the country, and some even among Nationalists, especially in the Cape, have urged that they should be allowed to play a larger part in it. Yet these people were deliberately excluded from participation in the referendum. Surely the implication of this is obvious enough. By such total exclusion the all-too-familiar words 'For Europeans Only' are carved, not merely on the gateposts, but on the very foundation stones of the structure of the Republic.

### 'Discrimination Against' in the Republic

Dr. Verwoerd, to be fair, does not see it this way. He is reported to have said recently that 'the Republic belongs to everybody who lives in South Africa'. Surely the Prime Minister is either deceiving himself, or else he is using words and concepts in a sense in which they would not be employed by most of us. This exclusion of non-Europeans from all consultation of any kind on this matter implies racial discrimination, not only in a very blatant form, but in the sense of 'discrimination against'. This is inherent in the basis of the new Republic.

It was not so, or certainly not in anything like the same degree, in the Union under the Crown formed in 1910. In one of the four colonies, the Cape, where non-European voters possessed franchise rights on the same roll and the same qualifications as Europeans, they *had* a voice in shaping the country's constitutional destiny. The constitution of 1961 not only is based but is seen to be based on racial discrimination, as that of 1910 was not. And this at a time when such racial discrimination is much more unpopular with the rest of the world, and much less morally justifiable, than it was in 1910.

The second notable feature of the new Republic—that barely more than half, even of that minority of the inhabitants actually consulted, was positively in favour of the change—shows again that the situation is completely unlike that of 1910. For in 1910 Union under the Crown undoubtedly enjoyed the positive support of the great majority of the enfranchised population. Moreover, it is certain that the republican majority in 1960 would not have been attained if it had been believed by most of the voters that it would be followed by what appears to have been the Prime Minister's personal decision to take South Africa out of the Commonwealth.

I have spoken of the 'rooted aversion' felt by many of the anti-republicans to the new state. Of course, many who voted against the Republic are now ready to accept it. But there remain many who are anti-republican both by instinct and by conviction, and who will certainly never give their affection or wholehearted service to the Republic. These people are often to be found among those who are most deeply rooted in the South African soil. They are not always British by blood: least of all are they people who wish to see South Africa subordinated to the interests of the United Kingdom. But in these people the sense of allegiance to the monarchical tradition is as strong as the love of country, and has just as valid a claim to respect.

### Emotion and Reason

To be sure, this is sentiment, but it is as real and as deep as any other in politics and it is not wise to underestimate the force of such sentiment, least of all in South Africa. But those who remain anti-republican are not only so because of emotions deeper than reason. They are, equally, convinced of the intrinsic superiority of constitutional monarchy of the British kind, and their hostility to republicanism is strengthened by the rational conviction that it is an inferior system. They acknowledge that many of the advantages which the monarchical system offers in a

country like Britain cannot apply in a country where the ruler does not reside, and in which a large part of the population looks upon the Monarchy as foreign. But these disadvantages are offset by the conviction that a country like South Africa, with its mixture of different peoples (some of them unfriendly to each other), is one for which a republican system, with a Head of the State nominated for his political allegiance, is specially unsuitable. It would probably be unsuitable even if all races could participate, for that might make the choice of every President an occasion for inter-racial conflict. In existing circumstances, it has the contrary disadvantage of almost aggressively proclaiming that the Head of the State—supposedly the symbol of unity—is in fact the choice of a dominant minority and the symbol of its dominance. Moreover, in making the Head of the State the choice, in effect, of a political party caucus, as the first President is, it promotes that identification of state-government-dominant party towards which there is a disquieting trend in South Africa. Much Nationalist thinking already comes dangerously near to confusing opposition to the Government with disloyalty to the state.

Furthermore, to thoughtful anti-republicans, the conflict between them and their opponents involves a conflict of two political traditions, considerably at variance, on the relation of the individual to the state. The Afrikaner Nationalist usually claims, in all sincerity, to be a democrat, at least so far as whites are concerned. But he is strongly inclined to think of democracy in terms of imposing the will of a majority on all who do not concur in it. Some Nationalists, I believe, genuinely regard the police state as a good thing, at least for South Africa. The English-speaking South African, on the other hand, even when he is as illiberal as any Nationalist in matters of race relations, is more likely to be uneasy about emergency measures, quasi-dictatorial measures, restrictions of civil liberties or restrictions on access to the courts. He may feel that they are sometimes necessary, but he is usually aware that they need explaining and defending, and that the way in which they are exercised needs to be watched. He cannot entirely rid his mind and conscience of some respect for civil liberties and the rule of law even when these principles are invoked on behalf of non-Europeans.

### Illuminating Evidence of Nationalist Thinking

But in the debates leading up to and on the proclamation of the State of Emergency in South Africa last year, I cannot recall that any government spokesman or supporter expressed any opinion that the measures, though necessary, were regrettable, or showed any consciousness that they were open to abuse; nor can I recall any expression of readiness to safeguard them against such abuse. The study of the debates at the time of the proclamation of the state of emergency last year is most illuminating on Nationalist ways of thinking.

The new state, then, is unashamedly based on racial discrimination; it rests on the support of only a small majority of Europeans, and it is strongly opposed by many Europeans on grounds both of deep-seated sentiment and of rational conviction. To my mind, whether one shares these reactions or not, everything seems to lead to the conclusion that the Republic, far from being a unifying force, is likely to divide the country even more than it has been divided. It has already deepened the sense of non-Europeans that they have no part in the state: it has equally made the English-speaking element feel that their whole political tradition is regarded as alien in South Africa. Such a state must surely be regarded as inherently unstable. To correct that inherent instability, it seems to me that the Government is most likely to have recourse to more and more repressive measures—and certainly many of its supporters will not be reluctant to see it do so. Repression, however, will not bring real stability. As Talleyrand said, you can do almost anything with bayonets except sit on them.

Nevertheless, this instability does not seem to me to imply that there will be any serious weakening of the Government's parliamentary position in the near future.

Many people, of course, find it a hopeful sign that some Nationalists have made it clear that they are disturbed by some aspects of *apartheid*, and have been calling for radical changes in race relations. I would in no way underestimate the extent and the value of the rethinking which is going on in many Afrikaner



intellectual circles. But those who are contributing to this process are almost entirely to be found among clergy, academics, and other intellectuals. They do not appear to be making much impact on the man in the street and the man on the veld.

Indeed, the indications appear to be that the volume of Afrikaner support for Dr. Verwoerd is increasing rather than diminishing. That would appear to be the lesson of some recent by-elections, where the Nationalists have (since the referendum and the withdrawal from the Commonwealth) increased their poll in certain predominantly Afrikaans constituencies. The inference appears to be that many Afrikaners who have formerly supported the United Party are deserting it.

It is not surprising if this should be so. Dr. Verwoerd's personal prestige is very high, among a people to whom he appears almost literally as a new Joshua, who has finally led the Volk into the long-promised land. And the skilful way in which the withdrawal from the Commonwealth appears to have been presented in South Africa—as forced on Dr. Verwoerd by the hostility of the non-European and the weakness of the European members of the Commonwealth—has probably strengthened what is often in South Africa called the laager-mentality—the sense that the Volk must sink differences and stand united against the hosts of Midian which prowl and prowl around. Discussion, even criticism, among Nationalist intellectuals may continue. But whenever it comes to voting, I suspect, most Afrikaners will close the ranks in support of the Government.

### A New Type of Nationalist Politician

In this connexion I think it is relevant to point out the great strength and efficiency of the Nationalist Party machine. Moreover, in recent years a new type of Nationalist politician has come very much more to the fore at all levels: a man, often, of—shall I say?—rather more the rough diamond-type than his fellow-politicians of the older generation; less intellectual than the older type often was and is, but very much a doctrinaire; and often, by early experience, a party organizer. Such men are not likely to tolerate much divergence among the Volk from the sound party line. The Government, then, it seems to me, is likely to find that its position among Afrikaners has been consolidated rather than weakened by recent events.

Another consequence has been considerably to increase the embarrassment of the United Party. The party, as such, was never unequivocally anti-republican. Even during the referendum campaign, it preferred to lay its emphasis on the danger to South Africa's membership of the Commonwealth, if she became a Republic, and to say little or nothing of other objections to the republican case; to say 'not *this* republic', rather than 'not a republic'—presumably in the hope of attracting support from purely hypothetical people who were republican by conviction but alleged to be opposed to Dr. Verwoerd. But the United Party was at least unequivocal in its support of the Commonwealth connexion. Now that it appears to be disposed to acquiesce in the *fait accompli* both as regards the Republic and the rupture with the Commonwealth, it is left to flounder in search of a policy which will be acceptable to a sufficient number both of English-speaking and of Afrikaans-speaking supporters. The quest is not a promising one, though Sir de Villiers Graaff has recently made a courageous attempt to propound a non-European policy rather more liberal than the party has sponsored before.

Whether or not the proposal is too little, it is probably too late to give effectiveness to the United Party's appeal. For the Progressive Party has already secured its hold on the kind of people whom Sir de Villiers Graaff's recent proposals would be most likely to attract, as recent by-elections have shown, especially in predominantly English-speaking areas. Does this promise more effective opposition to the Government? Does it mean that English-speaking South Africans, now feeling up against it, are becoming more active in opposition to all aspects of nationalism than many of them have been hitherto?

To some extent, undoubtedly, these would be valid conclusions to draw. The Progressive Party, ever since its foundation, has been more lively, vigorous, and unequivocal in opposition to the Government than the United Party has ever been. As for the change in attitude of many English-speaking South Africans, I can only speak from personal observations of Natal. There it was

truly remarkable and inspiring to see how, time and again, anti-republican audiences, disposed to be rather conservative in racial matters, responded to speakers who told them bluntly that the political traditions which they were proclaiming their readiness to defend must be extended to include readiness to accord more just and liberal treatment to non-Europeans. Recently, an inter-racial political convention in Pietermaritzburg (a great stronghold of anti-republicanism) was surprisingly well supported by Europeans. These facts seem to me remarkable when one considers the shattering impact of events in the Congo (which, incidentally, may well have helped the Government to win the referendum) and elsewhere in Africa. South Africa's anti-republicans have not been given sufficient credit in Britain or anywhere else for refusing to be cowed by these events.

But though there are these heartening signs of a stronger opposition, they appear to be limited to areas in which nationalism is already numerically weak, and always has been. Opposition to nationalism tends to be mainly concentrated, outside Natal and the Eastern Province, in the cities. And the system of delimiting constituencies favours the rural areas, in which Nationalists are most numerous. The opposition cannot weaken the Government's parliamentary position unless and until it makes a large impact on the rural areas. If that happens at all, it must take time, even on the assumption that what has hitherto been regarded as legitimate opposition will not be curbed, in the name of the Republic one and indivisible. And the great question—one which is almost an obsession with South Africans of every kind—is whether time will be granted for the normal processes of peaceful political evolution to bring healing, or whether a terrible surgery will intervene.

The withdrawal from the Commonwealth, considered as distinct from the change in the form of government, will have consequences too numerous to be discussed here, and some of them could only be discussed by experts. But I would mention one probability which is directly related to my main theme. It seems to me inevitable that members of the Commonwealth will take an even keener (and to Nationalists more unwelcome) interest in South Africa's affairs than they have done hitherto. That may well tempt Afrikaner Nationalism to regard as a sort of fifth column those South Africans who in spite of everything will continue to regard the Commonwealth as politically their spiritual home. And that must still further deepen the divisions among the peoples of South Africa.—*Third Programme*

*This is the second of two talks on the new Republic of South Africa: the first, by S. A. Cilliers, gave another view and was published in THE LISTENER last week.*

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# The Listener

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## University Puzzle

IN the sixteen years since the war ended many people of an older generation have become worried that life at most of Britain's universities is not what it was or ought to be. Sons and daughters have not been finding places at a university with the ease that their parents did. There may be more scholarships about but they seem far harder to win. Fathers whose children have been fortunate enough to get in somewhere have been complaining about the apparent concentration today of university time on the getting of a slightly better degree than the man or woman in the rooms next door. There no longer seems to be any opportunity provided for the enjoyment of a period of mental and physical ease between the years of examination at school and the later pressures of working and family existence. In short, the competitiveness of life today can be seen at its most horrible in a threat to our system of university education.

The facts and figures which Sir Eric Ashby provides in a talk that we print today on another page appear to suggest that this competitiveness is likely to continue and even multiply in intensity. What is to be done? Sir Eric points the way to one solution by calling for an end to any monopoly in the award of that magic status-symbol 'the degree'. He would like to see the degree made a qualification that would be equally obtainable at—say—Manchester, Hull, Swansea, the Loughborough College of Technology, or the Bournemouth Municipal College of Art. Yet arrangements to make such a situation possible would only really be helpful to the whole university system if they were to be accompanied by a general public relaxation about the degree, or a certain sort of degree, as a status-symbol, an end in fact to the rat-race. At the moment, when candidates apply for jobs in most of our business or public service organizations they are often short-listed on a basis of diploma or degree, and—if degree—were the honours accompanying it first, second, or third class? Sir Eric's idea would not amount to much if selection boards for the filling of vacancies in the future merely pricked their lists on a basis of degree by some imagined seniority, with the older universities taking priority, the university colleges next, and the training colleges behind them. (The boards could have the soundest of reasons for doing this, acting without snobbery but on the known strength of a faculty at some particular centre—Edinburgh for medicine, Reading for agriculture, and so forth.)

Nearly all the younger universities and university colleges in Britain started their lives with a tradition and standards that were different from those of such older universities as Oxford and Cambridge. Now the whole system, of which they are part, despite its own expanding shape, is not going to be big enough to meet the needs of the large numbers of university aspirants there will be by 1970. Meanwhile the earlier ideal involved, the kind of Socratic education associated with the Oxford of Jowett or the Cambridge of G. E. Moore, seems today to have lost its charm because of the competitiveness of modern life. Perhaps a cure for this situation can only be found if our universities and colleges continue in the path of developing standards of their own, as is being done at Keele and Brighton. Interviewing boards of the future could take such a development into account, so that candidates could be judged by the most varied yardsticks. In time this could mean more opportunity than ever before for talent to be recognized.

## What They Are Saying

Home thoughts from abroad

MR. BUTLER'S REMARKS in Madrid and Lord Home's Iberian visit were interpreted by the communist press and radio as proof that the Western leaders generally wanted to give 'the two most openly fascist regimes in Europe' a prominent position in the Western alliance. A Prague radio commentator said Britain had been singled out to do the 'dirty work' because it would have been 'a bit uncomfortable' for President Kennedy, while West Germany was compromised by her past and France 'torn over Algeria'. The 'Western chiefs' were confident that Macmillan could 'ride almost any kind of political storm'.

Moscow's Tass correspondent reported from London that opinion there regarded the Lisbon visit as a 'demonstration of solidarity with Salazar' over Angola. He added: 'It goes without saying that Britain, with its rich experience in colonial affairs, is an indispensable counsellor on such matters'. Earlier Moscow had said:

Britain . . . has always followed a policy of ruthlessly exploiting her colonies, which has greatly held up their social, economic and cultural development . . . In Nigeria, for example, with British rule, there was one doctor to 58,000 inhabitants and 95 per cent. of the population could neither read nor write.

Several West German newspapers discussed Britain's possible entry into the Common Market. The comment was sympathetic—as this, for example, from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*:

Above all it seems to us imperative that there should be an accommodating attitude to Britain in the most difficult question which it sees in its entry, the integration of agriculture . . . Equally, nothing should be done which would seriously endanger Britain's relations with the Commonwealth. Even though the Commonwealth no longer retains its former economic significance, it remains politically an asset of priceless value for the whole Western world. . . .

The East German radio said that Dr. Adenauer supported Britain's entry into the Common Market because he wanted to make use of her 'as an accomplice for his revanchist policy' and to send all the Common Market countries 'as vassals into another campaign against the East'.

Moscow radio complained that Britain's refusal to buy Soviet oil had 'nothing to do with commerce'. Russia was offering only 5 per cent. of Britain's total oil imports, and if Britain bought more Soviet commodities, including oil, Russia could buy more from Britain.

The Alabama racial disturbances were given much prominence in Moscow's broadcasts to Africa, with emphasis on the attitude of the State authorities and little or no mention of Federal action. It was also said that, wherever a Negro went in America or whatever he wanted to do, he 'always' came up against 'the high barrier of racial discrimination'.

The East German Deutschlandsender maintained that the Kennedy Government was aiding and abetting the 'fascist madness' in Alabama. Because of this Kennedy would find himself in a difficult position in Vienna. *Pravda* said the Soviet attitude at the Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting would be that—

to try to arrest and reverse the march of history in our age of social transformations and technical progress is not merely to put oneself into the position of Don Quixote, but lays the peoples open to the threat of a terrible nuclear holocaust.

France's *Figaro* said that, for Mr. Khrushchev, Berlin was the real 'Gordian knot', but unless he had 'some new inspiration' about a method of untying it, 'the best thing would be to leave it alone'.

Cairo radio's only reference to a recent royal wedding was a single sentence repeated in various bulletins: 'The marriage of King Hussein of Jordan took place in Amman today'.

The New China Agency reported an unusual social event:

More than 300 people of the middle and upper strata of Tibet held a summer garden-party in the Norbulingka Palace on May 16. Those who attended the garden-party spoke freely of the favourable situation in the Tibet Region. . . .

—Based on information collected by the B.B.C. Monitoring Service  
STANLEY MAYES



# Did You Hear That?

## THE BATTLE OF ALBUERA

ONE HUNDRED and fifty years ago, General Beresford concentrated his Anglo-Portuguese army at Albuera to oppose the French under Soult. Thinking that the French would attack along the main road, Beresford placed his best troops on the left wing to cover it. On the right was a Spanish army under General Joachim Blake. The French Marshal, not realizing that the Spanish had arrived, put his main attack on what he believed to be the exposed British right flank having first distracted Beresford with a feint on the left, as Colonel ANTHONY JACKSON described in 'Today' (Home Service).

'Beresford was completely misled by this' he said, 'and was much surprised when two French divisions suddenly appeared out of the woods making for the heights behind Blake. The 2nd British Division was hastily moved across in support, and Stewart, the divisional commander, ordered Colborne's brigade to move into a forward position from which they brought heavy fire on to the flanks of the French columns. The 1st Lancers of the Vistula and the 2nd Hussars charged the exposed British. Hidden by the smoke and a sudden fierce rainstorm they achieved complete surprise, and in five minutes two-thirds of Colborne's brigade were casualties. The violence of the Polish charge carried them so far that General Beresford himself became engaged in hand-to-hand fighting.

'As the Poles withdrew, Houghton's brigade came forward to relieve the Spaniards. For half an hour these men, 1,600 of them, resisted 8,000 of the French, and, in doing so suffered 1,200 casualties but won immortal glory. Houghton himself was wearing a green frock coat. In full view of the French and under heavy fire he calmly changed into his scarlet uniform coat, without even dismounting. A few minutes later he was killed, and Colonel Inglis of the 57th (Middlesex Regiment) took his place. The French artillery and musketry fire grew fiercer. Inglis, after his horse was shot, stood by the Colours encouraging his men, until hit by grape shot in the neck. He refused to retire and lying on the ground cried: "Die hard, the 57th, die hard".

'His gallant example was followed by others. Ensign Jackson was wounded three times while carrying the King's Colour. He handed the Colour over to Ensign Veitch, who was also badly wounded. After having his wounds dressed Jackson returned to the field and demanded the Colour back. Veitch refused, and a fierce argument began which nearly led to blows.

'To the right of the Middlesex, the 29th (Worcestershires) were suffering just as severely. Fearing that the Regimental Colour might be captured Ensign Vance tore it from its pike. He too was killed, and when the action was over the Colour was found concealed in his coat. The French suffered equally



General Beresford disarming a Polish lancer during the Battle of Albuera: a print published in 1815

*By courtesy of the Parker Gallery*

heavily, and when at last the 4th British Division came to the assistance of Stewart, the battle was won, a victory largely due to the bravery of Houghton's brigade. The Middlesex Regiment may remember with pride the day that earned them the name Albuera as part of their cap badge.

## LITTLE RINGED PLOVER

'The lagoon in the sand pits is a secluded place' said STANLEY CERELY in a talk in the Home Service. 'I went there one evening last summer, not having visited the place for months. I was walking slowly towards the edge of the lagoon when I heard an unfamiliar bird-call—a mournful piping which was several times repeated. I searched hard for the bird through my binoculars, but could not find it at first owing to the broken outlines of the many ridges of muddy sand which excavator and bull-dozer had recently churned up. The distracting effect of vast numbers of flints scattered over the surface made the search more difficult. But at last I spotted it, rather more than fifty yards away: a small black-and-white bird, only about six inches long, running with lowered head and twinkling feet, now out of sight behind a little furrow, now mounting to the top of a hillock. "Peeou", it called plaintively, and then again, "peeou".

'It was obviously a plover and looked remarkably like a ringed plover; but the calls made by this little fellow did not in the least resemble those of the ringed plover. The irregular patches of black and white of its plumage provided effective camouflage at a distance. A white collar round its neck made the head appear separate from the body. When the bird was still, the head might have been just another pebble among the countless flints.

'I sat down on a mound to watch. Although I was in full view, the plover began to move towards me; not directly, but in the zig-zag, erratic manner of plovers. As I watched, it stopped and sank slowly forward on to its breast. No doubt about it: it was a little ringed plover—a species uncommon in Britain. A telling point in identifying it was that it had no white wing bar, such



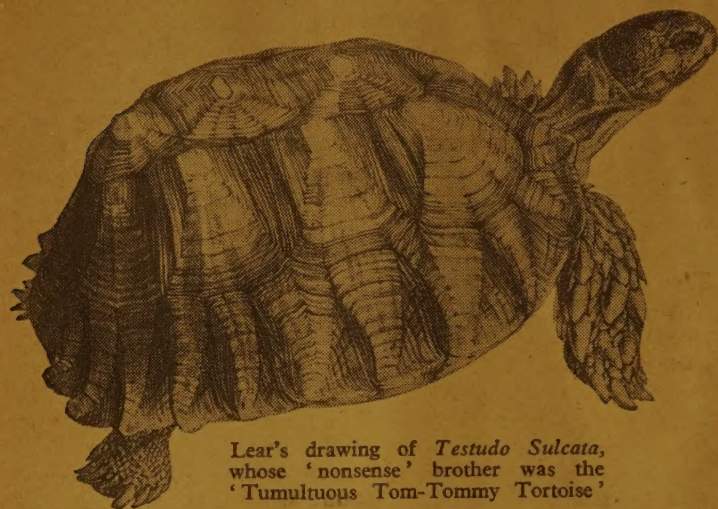
Little ringed plover and chick

*Eric Hosking*



as its close relative, the well-known ringed plover, has; but most distinctive of all was that rather forlorn call-note.

'I stood up. Immediately the plover ran off. I was certain it had a nest over there among the flints, even though I well knew that the little ringed plover nests only rarely in Britain. After



Lear's drawing of *Testudo Sulcata*, whose 'nonsense' brother was the 'Tumultuous Tom-Tommy Tortoise'

hatching, by the way, the chicks leave the nest as soon as they are dry from the egg.

'I sat down again and kept very still. Almost at once, the plover veered round jerkily like a little weather-cock, hesitated a moment and then cautiously returned to its former position, finally sinking down beside exactly the same flint as before. Now, there was no doubt. When I walked up to the nest, I experienced another surprise. The nest contained three eggs and one newly hatched chick, still damp and limp. Another egg was chipping, and the egg-tooth at the tip of the bill of the youngster inside could be seen at the small opening it had made in the shell. Plovers' eggs hatch within a short period of one another. Within twenty-four hours it was likely that the nest would be empty. I had arrived at the most exciting moment of all. I hurried away and left the plover to cover her treasures.

'Next morning, I returned early. Again, I was lucky. Two of the eggs only had hatched; a third was chipping. Quickly, I erected a hide. Within five minutes of my occupation of the hide the little plover came running over the flints and sat upon the two remaining eggs. The two chicks had been led away across the sand and mud by the other parent bird when I first arrived on the scene.

'For several hours, I watched this delightful little creature. Every now and again, I heard her mate calling to her in the distance and, when she answered, her whole body quivered. So patient she was, as she waited for the moment when the two remaining chicks would break out of their shells. Soon, it was obvious that things were about to happen. Some disturbance was going on beneath her. She stood up once or twice, with her head cocked on one side, looking down at the eggs in the most concentrated way. The hole in one of the eggs had become a little larger. When she settled again, she kept picking up a small pebble in the nest beside her and dropping it again. This habit of picking up and dropping small objects is common to many birds in moments of emotional excitement. While the chick was still inside the egg, the plover called to it repeatedly. It was a touching moment'.

## A TWO-SIDED MAN

'There were two sides to Edward Lear', said BEATA BISHOP in 'Monitor' (B.B.C. Television), 'the Grand Peripatetic Ass and Bosh-producing Luminary, as he called himself, and the topographical landscape painter, art master to Queen Victoria, socialite, traveller, friend of the titled and famous. The two depended on each other. Mr. Lear, the famous artist, used Queery-

Leary, his private nickname, as an outlet for the other side of his character; Queery-Leary depended on Mr. Lear for his subjects.

'So close is the link that almost every bit of nonsense is the distorted mirror image of some serious piece of work. Lear's parrot book, produced under the auspices of the Zoological Society, is a masterpiece of precision, and as a painter of birds his attention to detail was as clinical as his results are striking. But in his coloured bird book for children both Mr. Lear, scientist, and his birds became equally ludicrous.

'His *Tortoises, Terrapins and Turtles* is another splendid piece of scientific observation. He drew the creatures from life. But the *Testudo Sulcata* of science has a nonsense brother in the "Tumultuous Tom-Tommy Tortoise who beat a Drum all day long in the middle of the wilderness".

'At the age of twenty-four Lear gave up natural history drawings for landscapes. There was more money in them and he needed money badly. His artistic output was prodigious. In an average year he produced just under 500 sketches and paintings. Tennyson himself celebrated his Greek book in a poem. Critics praised the accuracy of his landscapes in which even the geological details were absolutely right. What he could not get right was the human figure.

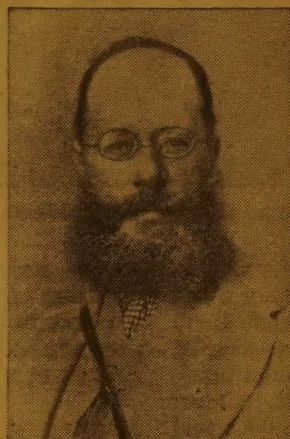
'Lear's limerick illustrations teem with people—queer, crazy ones full of vitality. These old men and young persons from strange places inhabit a highly personal world where there are no rules. They do inexplicable things. Sometimes they get away with it. Sometimes there is trouble with people known as "they", who object. "They" are the adults, the cold-hearted enemies who debunk the heroes' fantasies and insult or even destroy them.

Behind the wild tomfoolery there is a great deal of sadness. The Old Man of Vesuvius takes to the bottle. The Old Lady on the holly-tree succumbs to melancholy. The limerick ladies are even odder than the men. They look ugly and old even if they are officially described as young. At best they are stiff and decorous. And, as a rule, they indulge in completely useless pastimes:

There was a young lady of Welling  
Whose praise all the world was a-telling  
She played on the harp, and caught several carp  
That accomplished Young Lady of Welling.

Lear expressed his deepest personal problems in nonsense songs. He was as lonely as the Dong with a luminous nose who never found his Jumbly girl. His family consisted of an old Albanian servant and Foss, the cat. Melancholy and whimsy went hand in hand. The consecutive nonsense books were a vast success, though Lear was astonished at his ability to make people laugh.

The public had to be entertained, and Lear worked like a beaver. He suffered from asthma, epilepsy and bad eyesight most of his life. Eventually he grew old—without ever growing up'.



Edward Lear



'Lear's limerick illustrations teem with people—queer, crazy ones': above, the 'young lady of Welling'



# Universities Today and Tomorrow

SIR ERIC ASHBY discusses the challenge of expansion

**I**N the summer of 1939, just before the war, there were some 50,000 students in the universities of Britain. This year there are over 100,000. That is a measure of the expansion of universities over the last two decades. Over the previous two decades, the years between the wars, there was scarcely any expansion at all; indeed you have to go back to the years between 1910 and 1920 to find any similar explosion of student members.

There were two forces behind this explosion—indeed behind both these explosions—of student numbers. One force was the increasing democratization of education. Cheap (and, later on, free) secondary schooling enabled more and more boys and girls to reach the standard of attainment required for entry to universities; and then, more recently, the financial barriers which blocked the way to the university for thousands of young people have been lifted by grants from the ratepayer and the taxpayer. The other force was the demand for graduates. It has taken two wars to convince Britain that higher education is a good investment; indeed many people say that Britain is not convinced yet. Nevertheless employers are now turning to universities for all kinds of skilled manpower, and since 1945 there has been a brisk seller's market in brains and talent.

## Two Powerful Forces

These two forces—the one pushing freshmen into universities, the other sucking graduates out—are still powerful. Every year educational opportunities improve. More pupils stay on at school to take advanced level courses for the G.C.E., and this upward trend is about to be lifted even more steeply by the high birth rates in the early nineteen-forties. And as for the force drawing graduates out of universities, there is no sign yet that the market is saturated.

So our present student population, 100,000, is not enough. The two forces for expansion continue to play on those who finance and those who administer universities. Propagandists heavily armed with statistics tell us that we have fewer students per million of population than Portugal, Egypt, or Bulgaria; that Russia has—relative to her population—five times as many students as we have, and America nine times as many. The statistics are misleading. Nevertheless there is some truth in the message of these Jeremiahs. This country does need more graduates than our universities are at present able to provide. To this end the Chancellor of the Exchequer has suggested that provision should be made for at least 170,000 places in the universities of Britain by the nineteen-seventies. This is to be accomplished through massive expansion on the part of nineteen of our universities, together with the rapid building up of new universities in Brighton, York, and Norwich, and the foundation of three or four more.

There are three ingredients for expansion of universities: bricks-and-mortar, staff, and students. I say nothing about bricks-and-mortar because there is no educational problem (although there are plenty of other problems) about putting up a building. All you need is an architect, a contractor, and a cheque book. But getting staff is a real problem. If we are to have 170,000 students in the nineteen-seventies we shall need some 8,000 more university teachers, over and above replacements for present staff who retire. A chemistry building can be put up in three or four years, but it takes ten to twenty years to train the professors and lecturers who are to be put into the building. In other words the staff for these 170,000 students should be in the pipeline now, as assistant lecturers, research students, and demonstrators. There are some in the pipeline, but there are good reasons for thinking that there will not be enough of them. One is that in many subjects the quality (and often the quantity too) of candidates for academic posts is disappointingly low. Another—and related—reason is a growing dissatisfaction, on the part of

young scholars, with university teaching as a career. In my view this growing dissatisfaction is not due to the salary scales offered to academics (modest as they undoubtedly are compared with what the men could earn outside) but to a deep and fundamental ambivalence in the *ethos* of the academic profession.

## The Rat-race to Publish

Almost every young lecturer would like one day to become a professor. You might suppose that his chances of becoming a professor depend on how well he teaches or professes his subject. You would be wrong. The oligarchies of academics responsible for his promotion are likely to pay little attention to his dedication to students, his clarity as a teacher, his skill in transmitting knowledge, or even his mastery of the state of knowledge in his subject; sometimes they will not even inquire whether he reflects on new ideas or acquires new points of view. What they will ask is how much he has published. So the young man who is inspired to devote his career to the real purpose of a university, which is teaching at the frontiers of knowledge, finds himself obliged to enter a different career: the rat-race to publish. And to publish what? It must be 'original': minuscule analyses of kitchen accounts in a medieval convent; the structure of beetles' wings—some beetle whose wings have not been studied before; the domestic life of an obscure Victorian poet; the respiration cycle of duckweeds. All, no doubt, interesting; all, in a way, at the frontiers of knowledge, even though it is crawling along the frontier with a hand-lens; all original, in the sense that no one has done them before; but all (with some few exceptions) so secondary to the prime purpose of a university.

I am not criticizing genuine creative research. I am criticizing two things: one is the assumption (imported from Germany in the eighteen-fifties) that the prime purpose of a university is to pursue truth rather than to transmit truth; the other is this peculiar form of social mimicry forced upon perfectly good, thoughtful scholars who lack the inclination to do what is commonly understood by original research, but who are well able to explore the frontiers of knowledge in other ways. My point is that while the performance of such exercises as these—to the detriment of perspective and balance and relevance—remains such an important criterion for promotion in the academic world, many men who are interested in the prime purpose of a university simply will not enter academic life; and I do not blame them. But ought not the criteria for academic success (which are under the control of universities themselves) to be changed, so that a teacher like Socrates (who would have had to confess that he had no publications to his credit) becomes eligible for a professorship?

## Staff of High Quality

To get staff of high enough quality, dedicated to the purpose of a university, is going to be difficult. To get students of high enough quality will, in my view, present no difficulty at all. At present some 800,000 young people reach the age of eighteen each year. We can say with confidence that the upper 10 per cent. in intelligence of each age group—the brightest 80,000 from this reservoir of 800,000—are admirable university material and, if they display persistence and application, are capable of getting good degrees. There has been much talk lately about 'student wastage'—the percentage of students who leave universities without getting a degree; and some people fear that if we increase student numbers this percentage of wastage will increase. In fact, among the few universities which keep records of these things, wastage has decreased over the last few years, and there is no reason to think that the increase in numbers I have mentioned would lower the intellectual quality of students. Indeed this is a conservative estimate, but it means we would not drain our annual reservoir of high ability even if we recruited 80,000 students a



year into our universities; that is to say, even if we put the student population up to about a quarter of a million instead of 170,000. So let us be frank about the present policy for university expansion. It may give the nation all the graduates it needs. It may provide all the university places Britain can afford. What it will not do is to offer the chance of getting a bachelor's degree to every young person who is capable of getting one.

### Two Simple Facts

This exasperates some critics of the present policy. They thump their typewriters as they repeat that 30 per cent. of the age group go to college in America and only 4 per cent. go in Britain. These thumpers overlook two simple facts. One is that there are alternative avenues of higher education in Britain which are not through universities. Tens of thousands of people get a good higher education through teachers' colleges, colleges of technology, art-schools, and through being articled to accountants or solicitors or surveyors. Academic men assume too readily that to learn 'on the job' by sandwich courses, by apprenticeship, is immeasurably inferior to learning at a university; they assume that no one would take one of these avenues to higher learning unless he had failed to get into a university. I do not believe these assumptions are correct. The other fact which is overlooked is that thousands of able young people are reluctant to go to a university for their higher education because universities have become so specialized, so esoteric in their sense of values, so concentrated upon a few bands in the wide spectrum of experience. For instance, the pass course has virtually disappeared from English universities, and the honours course in some universities requires a student to do one subject—say chemistry—to the virtual exclusion of all other subjects. I said advisedly that young people are 'reluctant to go'. In fact they do go, because it is the only way to get a degree. Universities have a monopoly of degrees, and degrees have acquired a mystic status-value. It is a mark of inferiority for anyone with higher education not to be a graduate; to go through life without a gown and hood looks like becoming (as it has already become in America) a form of social nakedness.

Pressure on university places will become more and more severe. Our present plans offer no hope of relief—unless universities abandon the monopoly of the magic word 'degree'. If teachers' colleges (now that their courses last three years) offered a B.Ed. instead of a certificate; if colleges of advanced technology (whose courses include more humanities than any engineering student gets in a university) awarded a B.Tech. instead of a Dip. Tech., I believe two beneficial things would happen. One is that two important professions—teaching and technology—would gain enormously in morale and self-esteem. The other is that thousands of young people who will otherwise batter on the doors of universities will be perfectly happy to go to what they recognize will be for them more appropriate places for higher education, with standards (let us be in no doubt about this) not lower than those in universities but different from them. It is no good saying a diploma is as good as a degree. It is no good protesting that the argument is merely about labels. There is a myth of the gown and hood. Myths matter; and if we could dispel this one by attaching degrees to all forms of higher education of equivalent standard, then we could plan the expansion of our universities rationally; not asking whether there are enough places for every able girl and boy—for there will be acceptable alternatives all leading to degrees—but asking whether there are enough places to meet the national need for university graduates and the inclinations of those who prefer to study the subjects to be found only in universities. This is what Russia has done; and this (though the variety is concealed because nearly all her institutions granting first degrees are called colleges) is what America has done.

### Cathedrals or Chimneys?

I select four other items for brief comment. The first can be put in the words: 'cathedrals or chimneys?' Many German and American universities nestle in small quiet towns withdrawn from traffic and industry. Most British universities are in large, noisy, industrial cities. Where should our new universities be put? Among cathedrals or among chimneys? My own view is that it does not matter where you put a university provided there is plenty of room for it to be a coherent community with its staff

and students living (preferably) within walking distance. Then, how large should a university be? This, too, is—in my view—not a profitable question to ask. It depends, for instance, how you organize the university. If it is appropriately organized it can be large and still preserve its intimacy. Paris has a great university, with 67,000 students; Oslo a great university with 3,000. To ask which of these sizes is better is like asking whether an oak tree is better than a daffodil; an interesting problem, but a secondary one.

The word 'organize' brings me to my next provocation. For centuries universities have found it convenient to have administrative pigeon holes for different branches of knowledge; they are labelled faculties or departments or schools. One of the many amusing paradoxes of university life is that every encouragement is given to the advancement and transformation of knowledge—so that knowledge is always changing; while every obstacle is put in the way of changes in the administrative pigeon-holes into which knowledge is packed—so that the academic organization of knowledge hardly ever changes. Inevitably the growing points of knowledge attract the best scholars; and inevitably the administrative pigeon-holes are designed for knowledge which has ceased to grow. This leads to endless frustration and inconvenience: courses of study and even degree examinations must fit the pigeon-holes even if modern knowledge does not fit them; and so natural areas of knowledge become fragmented among artificially defined departments, just as tribes in tropical Africa are fragmented among artificially drawn frontiers, and so both knowledge and the students suffer. I suggest that some of these new universities should eschew altogether the words 'faculty' and 'department', and should invent new filing systems for knowledge. I would like to propose that some of the old universities should abolish their internal frontiers too; but that would be like asking judges to give up their wigs.

### Crisis in Academic Government

In academic government, with our plans for doubling the size of many of our universities, we face a genuine crisis. For the most precious feature about universities is that they are societies and not hierarchies. They are run by their members, not by a boss, even if the boss carries the title of 'principal and vice-chancellor'. This is the way Oxford and Cambridge still run. Decisions are made in the end by the votes of resident M.A.s. It is a clumsy system: it encourages pockets of anarchy; its inertia is incredible; it does not always produce wise decisions. But it has two virtues which outweigh these deficiencies: it ensures the maximum dispersion of responsibility and it ensures that initiative remains within reach of young and vigorous minds. In Oxford and Cambridge you do not have to wait to get responsibility until you are too old to use it with courage. The modern universities started with similar provisions in their constitutions. Decisions on academic matters were entrusted to the professors, and when these universities were founded the permanent staff consisted almost entirely of professors. So two generations ago it could be assumed that virtually the whole academic body of a university took part in all academic decision-making. This is no longer true. Of about 9,000 university teachers in Britain outside Oxford and Cambridge, only about 1,200 are professors. A few of the others have opportunities to take part in decision-making, but by and large the Scottish and the modern English universities are run by oligarchies (I do not mean the word disrespectfully—they are dedicated and hard-working oligarchies) of professors, and the non-professorial university teachers, who constitute 85 per cent. of the staff, have comparatively little influence on decisions.

If this had been a deliberate policy, one could defend it (though I personally would not). But it has arisen, just as the Procrustean constraints of faculties and departments have arisen, because the circumstances have changed and the classification has not changed to meet the new circumstances. The career grade in academic life now is the lecturer. There are over 5,000 of them. By the nineteen-seventies there will be nearer 10,000. If the universities of Britain are to keep their unique and precious system of government—if, indeed, they are to remain societies and not what that scathing critic Veblen would have called 'factories of erudition'—university constitutions will need drastic revision. I believe this is not a difficult problem to solve.

—From a talk in the Third Programme



## The Sky at Night

## Recent Studies of Venus

By PATRICK MOORE

ON February 12, Soviet scientists launched an unmanned probe rocket towards the planet Venus. It was not the first vehicle of its type, but it was certainly the most ambitious to date, and important results were expected from it. The probe was not designed for an actual landing on Venus, and at its closest approach—about May 20—was presumably about 65,000 miles from the planet.

Unfortunately the experiment has been a partial success only. The actual launching was carried out according to plan, and the last signals received from the probe showed that the calculated course was being maintained, but radio contact was lost at a comparatively early stage. It is, of course, out of the question to locate so small an object by either radar or visual means, and unless the Russians are able to re-establish radio contact—which now seems highly improbable—no further information from it will be gained.

The Soviet scientists have had many brilliant successes in their space research programme, but occasional set-backs are inevitable. The loss of contact with the Venus probe seems to have been due largely to bad luck. Either there was a fault in the radio transmitting system, or else the vehicle itself has been damaged in some way, probably by collision with a meteor. Yet the effort has by no means been wasted. Valuable experience has been obtained with regard to launching procedure, and there is no reason to doubt that future probes of the same type will meet with better fortune.

Sending a vehicle to Venus, or any other planet, is a much more difficult matter than launching a rocket to the Moon. The Moon is the nearest natural body in space, and is never much more than a quarter of a million miles from the Earth. When at inferior conjunction—that is to say, approximately between the Earth and the Sun—Venus is about one hundred times as remote as this, while Mars never comes much within 35,000,000 miles of us.

Moreover, it is not possible to wait until Venus is at its closest and then launch a rocket straight from the one world to the other.

This type of orbit would entail continuous expenditure of fuel, and even the best propellants available today are palpably inadequate. It is essential to select the most economical orbit, so that the total distance covered by the probe must be greatly in excess of 25,000,000 miles. Moving in such a 'transfer orbit', the Russian probe swung inward from the Earth toward the orbit of Venus. Having reached perihelion, it may be expected to swing outward again until reaching aphelion, at about the mean distance of the Earth from the Sun (93,000,000 miles). It will in fact become a tiny artificial planet, and will continue in orbit round the Sun indefinitely.

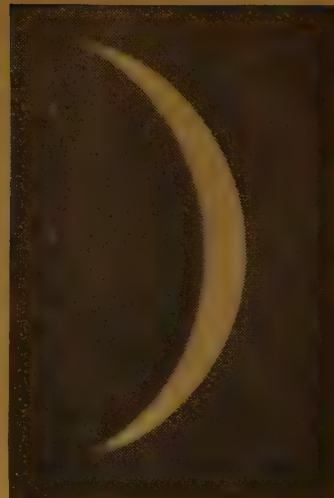
The loss of contact is particularly regrettable because so many fascinating problems remain to be solved. Of those concerned specifically with Venus itself, the question of the existence or non-existence of a magnetic field is of importance. Results obtained from the Russian Lunik rockets of 1959 have shown that the Moon's magnetic field is extremely weak, if indeed it exists at all, but Venus is an altogether different proposition. The planet is in some ways similar to the Earth, since it is only slightly inferior in size, mass, and mean density.

The Sun sends out streams of electrified particles, some of which reach the Earth and are recorded. If Venus is associated with a strong magnetic field, it may be expected to produce measurable effects whenever it lies more or less between the Sun and the Earth, *i.e.* near inferior conjunction. Analysis of magnetic records carried out by the Dutch astronomer Houtgast indicates that such effects are detectable, and the indications are that the magnetic field of Venus is more powerful than that of the Earth. However, it cannot be claimed that these results are of high accuracy, and more precise information will best be collected by means of rocket probes.

Another problem which has not yet been solved concerns the rotation period of the planet. Visual studies cannot provide the answer, since it is never possible to observe the actual surface of Venus; all we can see is the upper part of the relatively dense, 'cloudy' atmosphere. Vague shadings are often visible, but are too diffuse and impermanent to yield results of any value—quite apart from the fact that we still know almost nothing about the general atmospheric circulation or local wind-systems.

Many estimates of the rotation period have been made, based on various lines of investigation—visual, spectroscopic, and radio, for instance. No agreement has been reached. For example, studies of radio waves from Venus, carried out by J. D. Kraus at Ohio, have led to a derived period of 22½ hours; G. P. Kuiper, using visual and photographic methods, prefers about 30 days; A. Dollfus and other French astronomers believe the rotation to be of the 'captured' type, and so equal to the time taken for Venus to complete one journey round the Sun (224½ Earth-days). Kraus's researches have been criticized as unreliable, and it is probably true to say that most authorities have regarded Kuiper's estimate as the best available.

The latest results, leading to a period of only ten days, come from Russia. They are based not upon true radio astronomy, but on radar. The Soviet workers have successfully 'bounced' signals off Venus, and have recorded the echoes. A widening of the frequency spectrum is attributed to the planet's rotation, and it seems that the ten-day period is there regarded as established with fair certainty.



The planet Venus, which goes through phases like the Moon, photographed through the 200-inch telescope at Mount Palomar, California, when approaching its nearest point to the Earth



The unmanned 'probe' rocket launched towards Venus by the Russians in February



Yet extreme caution is needed. For one thing, nothing positive is known about the axial inclination of Venus, and it is possible—though perhaps rather unlikely—that the angle of inclination is very sharp; it must be remembered that in the case of the planet Uranus, the tilt exceeds a right angle, so that the rotation is technically retrograde. Moreover, the radar researches are of great delicacy, and it would certainly be premature to say that this long-standing problem has been fully solved, though the Russian results are of great interest. We can only await further information.

The question of rotation period naturally affects our ideas about surface conditions on Venus, of which we are still much in the dark. Our knowledge is severely restricted by the fact that the surface is never directly observable; we can only collect what evidence we have, and then put the most reasonable interpretation upon it. Until recently it was generally believed that Venus must be a totally arid dust-desert, without a trace of moisture anywhere. This idea was supported by the fact that the planet's atmosphere contains an enormous amount of carbon dioxide—first established by Adams and Dunham, at Mount Wilson, nearly thirty years ago—whereas there appeared to be no evidence of water vapour or free oxygen. Now, however, the situation has changed.

The only way to study the composition of Venus's atmosphere is by means of the spectroscope. Spectral lines due to carbon dioxide are very much in evidence, but lines produced by  $H_2O$  might be expected to be largely masked by similar lines produced in the atmosphere of the Earth. To disentangle these 'telluric' lines from any lines originating from Venus is a most difficult matter so long as observations are carried out from the surface of the Earth. Accordingly, two American observers, Commander Ross (the pilot) and C. B. Moore, went up in a balloon, and photographed the spectrum of Venus from a high altitude, where much of the densest part of the Earth's atmosphere lay below. The results were eminently satisfactory. Instead of being devoid of water vapour, the atmosphere of Venus proved to contain a considerable amount of it.

It seems, then, that the dust-desert idea is weakened—though not by any means disproved; it is important to bear in mind that only the upper part of Venus's atmosphere is available for examination, and we still have no proper information on conditions lower down.

Another astronomer who has made efforts to study Venus by means of instruments carried in a balloon is A. Dollfus, of France. Dollfus's first ascents were only partially successful, but he is now almost ready for a further attempt. The flight will be made within the next month or two, and scientists—and others—all over the world will be anxious to wish him good luck. It is to be hoped that he will be able to confirm the American results, and to provide further valuable information.

Until we have found out more about the atmosphere, we cannot hope to do more than speculate about what Venus is really like. According to a theory put forward by F. L. Whipple and D. H. Menzel, the 'clouds' are of  $H_2O$ , and the surface of the planet is almost entirely covered with water. This idea sounds much more plausible now than it did before the detection of atmospheric water-vapour.

In 1958 I suggested that if oceans exist on Venus they may contain forms of primitive life. The conditions may, in fact, be not dissimilar to those which prevailed on the Earth in Cambrian times, about 500 million years ago. At that stage, the Earth's atmosphere contained much less free oxygen but much more carbon dioxide than it does now, and a modern man would have been unable to breathe it; it was only later that the spread of plants resulted in the provision of more free oxygen at the expense of carbon dioxide. Yet the Cambrian oceans contained life, which steadily evolved into more complex organisms. It seems not unreasonable to suppose that the same sequence could occur on Venus.

This raises another interesting speculation. Unless some unknown factor intervenes, men from Earth will reach Venus in the foreseeable future—certainly within the next few centuries. Attempts may be made to modify the planet's atmosphere. If successful, this procedure might well interfere with the natural evolution of indigenous life there. It must be emphasized that this suggestion is based largely on guesswork, and so far we cannot even prove that Venus contains oceans, to say nothing of life. Until space research methods have been more highly developed, it is unlikely that we will be able to reach any conclusions one way or the other.

Radar contact with Venus leads to another result which is of extreme interest to astronomers: the more accurate determination of the distance between the Earth and the Sun. In this field, work has been carried out with the 250-foot radio telescope at Jodrell Bank, and is yielding positive information.

What has to be done is to determine the actual distance of Venus as accurately as possible. The relative sizes of the planetary orbits are satisfactorily known, and, comparatively speaking, it is a straightforward matter to draw up a 'scale model' of the Solar System. Once any particular orbit has been determined in terms

of actual distance, the rest may be derived. In other words, once we have calculated the orbit of Venus, we are able to obtain that of the Earth. Radar pulses naturally travel at the speed of light (186,000 miles per second). The method is to transmit such pulses and then receive the 'echoes', measuring the time-lag. If the timing is accurate, the true distance of Venus may be computed. Yet the research is extremely difficult, since the 'echoes' are hardly strong enough to be measurable above the level of spurious radio signals and random fluctuations in the electrical circuits. A minor error may also be introduced if the pulses are reflected not by the actual surface of Venus, but by a layer at an appreciable height above the planet. The Jodrell Bank results show that the length of the astronomical unit is rather less than 93,000,000 miles, while similar studies carried out by the Russians yield 92,868,000 miles. It may be assumed that within the next few years the possible error will have been reduced to a few hundreds of miles, which is a striking advance on all previous determinations.

It is clear, then, that these new studies of Venus are of extreme importance to astronomers. Yet we have to admit that our knowledge of the planet itself can never be complete so long as we have to be content with observing it from a distance of millions of miles; so our main hopes do rest with rocket probes. The present Russian vehicle is an encouraging first step, and we may hope that it will lead on to a solution of at least some of the problems associated with this mysterious and fascinating world.

—Based on the B.B.C. television broadcast of May 15



Monsieur A. Dollfus, the French astronomer, in the gondola of the balloon from which he is attempting to study the planet Venus



# Miracle and History

By ANTONY FLEW

**D**AVID HUME was born in Edinburgh in 1711 on April 26, by the old calendar. He died in the same city in 1776, the year of the Declaration of American Independence. Academic philosophers usually, and no doubt rightly, concentrate on his account of causality, and of the nature of arguments from experience. They try to analyse the notion of causal necessity, and they discuss what is now labelled the problem of induction. This problem, which Hume discovered, has been called 'the scandal of philosophy'. But in his own day the most scandalous pages in all Hume's philosophical and historical writings were those of the tenth section of his *Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*.

These treat 'Of Miracles'; and they end with the mordant words:

Upon the whole we may conclude that the Christian religion not only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity. And whoever is moved by faith to assent to it is conscious of a continued miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience.

It was thanks largely to this obnoxious section that Hume was able to record in his autobiographical note, complacently: 'Answers by Reverends and Right Reverends came out two or three in a year'. Yet in the hubbub of a still continuing controversy Hume's subtle and fundamental argument seems never to have been fully understood.

The first thing to appreciate is that the section 'Of Miracles' and the one after it are both parts of a single co-ordinated case. They constitute Hume's answer to what was the stock programme of Christian apologetic in his day. This programme achieved its archetypal fulfilment at the turn of the century, in the writings of William Paley. It has two stages. The first is an attempt to establish the existence and certain minimal characteristics of God by appealing only to natural reason and experience. This is represented by Paley's book *Natural Theology*. The second stage is an endeavour to supplement this rather sketchy religion of nature with a more abundant revelation. This is represented by Paley's book *The Evidences of Christianity*.

In Paley, and among Hume's most respected contemporaries, the weight of the first part of the case was born primarily by the argument to design. If from a watch we may infer a watchmaker, then surely the orderliness of this universe entitles us to infer, by parity of reasoning, a universe maker. The second part of the case rested on the claim that there is ample historical evidence to show that the biblical miracles, including crucially the physical resurrection of Jesus, did in fact occur; and that this in turn proved the authenticity of the Christian revelation. In section eleven and elsewhere in his *Inquiry* Hume outlines those radical objections to any natural theology which he was later to develop and discuss in his final philosophical masterpiece, the *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*. The overriding purpose of the complementary section 'Of Miracles' is to dispose of the other half of the apologist's programme. Hume's main contention is, in his

own words, 'that a miracle can never be proved so as to be the foundation of a system of religion'.

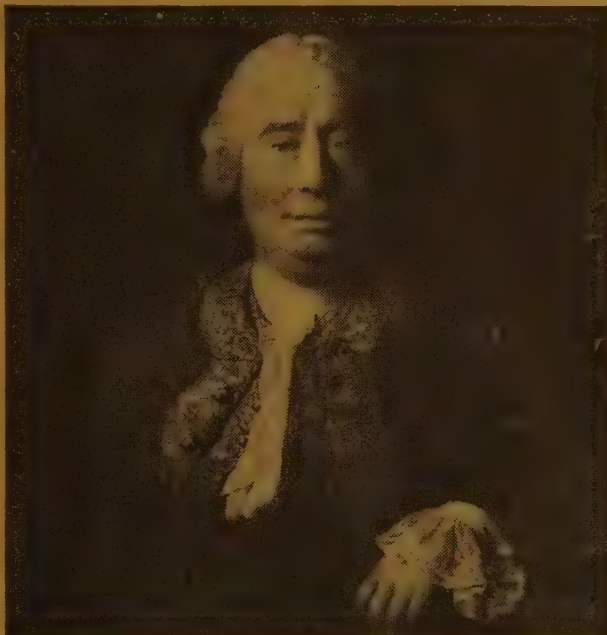
A miracle he defines as 'a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent'. Modern critics have tried to fault this definition, on various counts. It is sufficient here to say two things in reply. First, that this was the sense in which Hume's opponents construed the miraculous. Thus Samuel Clarke in his famous Boyle lectures had defined 'miracle' as 'a work effected in a manner . . . different from the common and regular method of providence, by the interposition either of God himself, or of some intelligent agent superior to men'. Second, that if the occurrence of a miracle is to serve—as Clarke and the orthodox tradition would have it—for the proof of evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person, then surely miracle must be conceived in this way. For it is only and precisely in so far as it is something really transcendent—something, so to speak, which Nature by herself could not contrive—that such an occurrence forces the conclusion that some supernatural power is being revealed.

Confronted by this idea a modern, scientifically minded agnostic might well try to dismiss it out of hand. A law of nature can admit of no exceptions: nor is it the sort of law which it is possible to transgress. The expression 'law of nature' is so used by scientists that to speak of violating such a law must be contradictory and without sense. The miraculous is thus ruled out by definition.

To do this without further ado must appear high-handed and arbitrary. But the same scientifically minded agnostic in a more conciliatory vein could urge that though this is indeed a matter of definition it is certainly not a mere matter of definition. The implicit definition to which he is appealing is not arbitrary. It is grounded solidly on the basic objective of the whole scientific quest. If scientists are to discover universal explanations they must insist on seeking always for completely comprehensive laws. More to the present point is the fact that our sole source of knowledge of the capabilities and the incapacities of Nature lies in our study of what actually goes on round us. It is an illusion to think that there is available to mere natural reason and experience some second and independent authority revealing what matter alone can and cannot do; and so enabling us to conclude that if any further effect is found this could only be the work of a power above Nature.

So when something occurs inconsistent with some proposition previously believed to express a law of nature, this occurrence is not a reason for proclaiming a violation: it is a reason for confessing the error of our former belief, and for resolving to search for the law which does hold.

This is the sort of position that a modern, scientifically minded agnostic might take. But the contention characteristic of Hume is different, although possibly complementary. Hume is concerned primarily not with a matter of fact but with a question of evidence. So even if his argument is successful, the way remains clear to believe in miracles simply on faith. This Hume is happy in his own way to allow, while insisting always that 'a wise man



David Hume, the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of whose birth has been celebrated this year: a portrait by Allan Ramsay  
By courtesy of the National Galleries of Scotland



proportions his belief to the evidence'. One consequence of this concern with evidence is that Hume's thesis, however offensively expressed, is nevertheless fundamentally defensive. His hope, as he says, is to have discovered 'a decisive argument . . . which must at least silence the most arrogant bigotry and superstition and free us from their impertinent solicitations . . . an argument which . . . will . . . with the wise and learned, be an everlasting check to all kinds of superstitious delusion . . .'

These words are carefully chosen. The argument is for the wise, for those who insist on proportioning their beliefs to the evidence. It is not one to show that the substantive claims of the bigoted and superstitious are in fact false. But it is intended to serve as a decisive check on any attempt to solicit the assent of rational men by producing proof of the occurrence of the miraculous. In particular the object is to inhibit the second movement of the standard apologetic attack.

If, for present purposes, we ignore a certain amount of misguided psychologizing then the gist of Hume's 'everlasting check', as presented in this section 'Of Miracles', would appear to be this. There is, he remarks, 'no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life than that which is derived from the testimony of men and the reports of eye-witnesses and spectators'. Yet all testimony is ultimately subject to assessment by the supreme court of experience. Certainly there are, as Hume observes, 'a number of circumstances to be taken into consideration in all judgments of this kind'. Yet 'the ultimate standard by which we determine all disputes . . . is always derived from experience and observation.'

### Paradoxical Dilemma

The weight of testimony required must depend on the apparent credibility of the events reported. If they would be in some way marvellous and rare then the testimony to them has to be treated with more circumspection than the witness to everyday occurrences. Suppose, though, it is to events which had they occurred would have been genuinely miraculous. Then we are confronted by a paradoxical dilemma, proof balanced against proof. However overwhelming the testimony might have appeared were it not being considered as evidence for a miracle, in this peculiar case it has always to be offset against a counterproof. In Hume's words again: 'A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined'.

In the first part of the section Hume argues generally from the concept of the miraculous: from, as he puts it, 'the very nature of the fact'. In the second he deploys several more particular assertions about the corruptions to which testimony is liable, urging that these are especially virulent wherever any religious issue is involved. He also adds a further philosophical consideration relevant to any attempt: 'to prove a miracle and make it a just foundation for any . . . system of religion'.

Here this consideration is expressed badly, and entangled in one or two inessential errors and confusions. But a letter makes it clear what he was after. The point is that if the occurrence of [some sort of] miracle is to serve as guarantee of the truth of a system of religion, then there must not have been any [similar] miracle under the auspices of any rival system, the truth of which is incompatible with the truth of the first. Consequently, in so far as we are considering a miracle not as a putative bald fact but as a possible endorsement of the authenticity of a candidate revelation, we have to throw into the balance—against the testimony for the miracles of any one candidate revelation—all the available testimony for all the miracles offered by all the rival systems inconsistent with the first. In its appeal to a necessary conflict of evidence this argument resembles the paradoxical dilemma expounded in part one of the same section.

Already it should have become obvious that there is more to Hume's check than a trite insistence that, since the occurrence of a miracle must be improbable, it would require to be exceptionally well evidenced. Yet, so far, nothing has been said specifically about history; although the whole section is full of references and illustrations which show that Hume saw 'the accounts of miracles and prodigies to be found in all history, sacred and profane' as presenting a problem to the critical his-

torian. The section 'Of Miracles' is the outer ring of his defences against the orthodox apologetic. But it is also part of his contribution to an understanding of the presuppositions and the limitations of critical history.

What he is contending is that the criteria by which we must assess historical testimony, and the general presumptions which alone make it possible for us to interpret the relics of the past as historical evidence, must inevitably rule out any possibility of establishing upon purely historical grounds that some genuinely miraculous event has indeed occurred. Hume concentrated on testimonial evidence because his conception of the historian, later illustrated in his own famous *History*, was of a judge assessing with judicious impartiality the testimony set before him. But Hume's principles can be applied more widely to all forms of evidence.

### Hume's Fundamental Propositions

The fundamental propositions are: first, that the present relics of the past cannot be interpreted as historical evidence at all, unless we presume that the same basic regularities obtained then as obtain today; and, second, that in trying as best he may to determine what actually happened the historian must employ as criteria all his present knowledge, or presumed knowledge, of what is probable or improbable, possible or impossible. In his first work, the *Treatise*, Hume had argued that it is only on such presumptions that we can justify the conclusion that ink marks on old pieces of paper constitute testimonial evidence. Earlier in this *Inquiry* he urges the inescapable importance of such criteria. In a footnote to the present section he quotes with approval the reasoning of the famous physician De Sylva in the case of Mademoiselle Thibaut:

It was impossible she could have been so ill as was proved by witnesses, because it was impossible she could, in so short a time, have recovered so perfectly as he found her.

Such reasoning will of course sometimes lead to false conclusions. Hume himself, by dismissing reports of phenomena which the progress of abnormal psychology has since shown to have been entirely possible, is exposed to Hamlet's too often quoted rebuke to overweening philosophy. What is impossible in fact is what is logically incompatible with a true law of nature. So if you mistake some proposition to express such a law when in fact it does not you are bound to be wrong also about the consequent practical impossibilities. But that a mode of argument must sometimes lead to false conclusions is no reason to reject it as unsound. The critical historian has no option but to argue in this way.

Here it is a help if one appreciates an important logical point, which even the most sympathetic critic would be hard put to find in Hume. Any proposition which might express a law of nature will be open and general and of the form *any such thing must be so and so*. The typical historical assertion is particular and in the past tense. (That is what is meant—or what ought to be meant—by talk about the uniqueness of the historian's subject.) Propositions of the first sort can in principle be tested at any time and in any place. Propositions of the second sort cannot any longer be tested directly at all. It is this which gives the former their vastly greater logical strength, justifying their use as criteria of rejection against the latter.

### Testing a 'Miracle'

If in any particular case the evidence for some miracle appears extremely strong, then perhaps the historian may ask himself whether the proposition which precludes this event does indeed express a true law of nature. It could then be further tested. If it were shown after all to be false, then perhaps the alleged particular miraculous event so strongly evidenced did indeed occur. That event could, however, by the same token then no longer be described as truly miraculous. Suppose on the other hand that the general proposition survives the further tests. Hume of all people should be the last to deny that it remains always conceivable that the particular event in question did in fact occur. Yet, in the end, no matter how impressive the testimony might appear, the most favourable verdict which history could ever return must be the agnostic, and appropriately Scottish: 'Not Proven'.

—Third Programme



# Wine and the Common Market

By EDWARD HYAMS

FOR over 2,000 years wine exporting has been important to France. The governments of other European countries have often, during those twenty centuries, tried to check the flood of imported wine. It may make people happy but it uses up foreign currency or gold. As early as Diocletian's reign the Italian wine-growers' lobby nearly succeeded in getting wine-growing prohibited in Burgundy. Today, France's wine trade is more important than ever, and one of the benefits which her wine-growers have been expecting from the Common Market is greatly increased wine sales in Germany. I am not referring to the great vintage wines, but to the ordinary wine which, in lands happier than ours, is drunk with meals instead of beer, tea, coffee, milk, or even the water to which some of us, like the beasts that perish, are reduced.

These wines are exported in bulk. The German people, being sensible chaps, want them: but their government, apparently, does not. The wine would have to be paid for with German exports which might be used to buy less frivolous imports. Under the Common Market the Germans cannot use the old customs barrier to check an unwanted import. So, if they want to dam the flow of French wine at their frontier, they have to find some other way. To the fury of the French wine-growers, they *have* found one: they are invoking Article Thirteen of a law regulating the sale of wine which dates from 1930 and which declares: 'It is not permitted to offer for sale grape must or wine derived wholly or partly from hybrid American vines'.



An old worker in the vineyards of Bordeaux



Loading the grapes into baskets in a vineyard in Burgundy

Photographs: French Tourist Office

This is not wanton anti-Americanism, and to explain it I shall have to turn to viticultural history. The vine, the vine of prehistory and history, of poetry and Old World agriculture, is *Vitis vinifera*. This is the only species native to Eurasia. It has been cultivated for over 5,000 years and in that time it has given rise, by selection, mutation, and cross-breeding of mutants, to numerous varieties: I know 200 but there are more than 2,000. The genus *vitis* has seven Far Eastern species of no economic value. But it has about twenty species in North America, and 100 years ago some varieties of one or two were brought to Europe for their beautiful autumn foliage; and for their fruit, which was said to taste of strawberries. Not everyone agrees about this taste. It is technically known as *gout de fox*; to me it tastes of liquorice. It makes the most horrible wine on earth.

With these vines, but not noticed at the time, came two fungus parasites: an oidium called *Uncinula necator*, first noticed in 1845; and a mildew called *Plasmopara viticola* which was not spotted in Europe until 1878. The American vines had evolved with these fungi and were, therefore, resistant to them. Our vines were not, and the French vineyards were devastated by these parasites for the same reason that South Sea Islanders were devastated by influenza. Means of controlling them both were found quickly: sulphur for the oidium and copper for the mildew. Up went growing costs, but our wine was saved. But in 1864 French vines had begun dying by thousands; this time the agent responsible was another American native, *Phylloxera vastatrix*. Again, American vines, having evolved with the parasite, were resistant, and ours were not. *Phylloxera* is an aphid, and in Europe it colonizes and destroys the roots of vines. The progress of infestation was appallingly swift: within ten years the south French vineyards were wiped out. By 1888 sixty-one out of eighty-nine vine-growing *départements* were affected in France alone and the aphid was appearing all over Europe. No economically viable means of control was found, and the vine of history would have been extinct by 1910 but for three factors. One: the progress of *phylloxera* is slower as it moves north; this gave the growers a breathing space. Two: the aphid cannot live in certain sandy soils near the sea. Three—and most important: a way



was found of enabling *Vitis vinifera* to live with phylloxera. The first thing the French did was to plant all-American hybrid vines, the source of the trouble but resistant to it. But the wine of these varieties was far too nasty for European palates. It then occurred to somebody to graft European vines on to American roots. The part of the vine below the ground was American and, when attacked by phylloxera, supported the aphids without inconvenience; the part of the vine above the ground was European and bore the same good grapes as it had been doing for thousands of years. Once again, our wine was saved.

### Breeding a New Vine

But there were a number of growers and ampelographers who realized that the need to graft every single one of the millions of vines planted every year was a grave economic burden. Suppose, they said, we could breed a new vine by crossing American species with *Vitis vinifera* in such a way that the hybrid offspring would bear grapes as fine as the European vines on a plant as resistant as American vines? I hope I make the difference clear: in the first case, that of grafting, you join your good wine grape to your resistant rootstock by a surgical operation. But a hybrid might give you both resistance and good grapes of its own *genetical* nature.

Breeding programmes were started; hybrids were produced. They were better than the all-American varieties, but not as good as the old European ones. It was left to the next generation of vine breeders to give up the idea of trying for total phylloxera resistance. They concentrated on getting the maximum of *vinifera* characters into their hybrids, while maintaining resistance to fungus disease. These men argued that grafting on to phylloxera-resistant roots had proved to possess unexpected advantages; for example, you could match your vine roots to your particular soil. It was not worth while eliminating grafting if you had to do it at the cost of quality in the wine. The results of this policy have been magnificent. Seibel, Seyve-Villard, Burdin, Landot, Tissier-Ravat, and other breeders have given the wine-grower a whole range of new vines. What are their qualities? Most of them look like the old European vines. They bear grapes of *vinifera* quality but in much greater quantity. Their foliage is wholly or partly resistant to the two fungus diseases so that, requiring few treatments with sulphur and copper, they are cheaper to cultivate than the old European vines. They have one other important and unexpected quality; when April or May frost kills the young shoots of the old European vines, there is no crop that year, for the second burgeoning is unfruitful. But the second burgeoning of the new hybrids is fruitful. This is important because spring frosts are an annual hazard in nearly all the great vineyard regions. Finally, the wines obtained from some of these new hybrids are excellent: they have, on innumerable occasions, been given top place at officially sponsored blind tastings. They have, with embarrassing frequency, been placed higher at such tastings, than the wines of old *vinifera* varieties whose names are practically sacred.

### Opposition from Vested Interests

Despite these facts there is still strong opposition to the planting of the new vines in France. Partly this is owing to the notorious conservatism of all farmers. In greater part, however, it is owing to a more sinister cause: large money interests are vested in the weaknesses of the old *vinifera* vines. Their lobby has not stopped short of spreading a rumour, as ridiculous as it is unfounded, that wines from hybrid vines are actually poisonous. This is not surprising. If large-scale commercial planting of the new vines continues, certain people are going to be hard hit. Purveyors of sulphur, copper and other fungicides, for instance; purveyors, too, of dusting and spraying apparatus; and the Algerian colons.

In spite of the mighty forces arrayed against them, the new vines are making their way. A few years ago the French authorities were forced, after repeated trials and tastings, not merely to permit the plantation of several hybrids, but even to recommend them. There are now six recommended varieties; eleven permitted varieties; and eleven more on probation. Meanwhile, opposition to the hybrids continues grimly. And the most powerful weapon in the opposition's armoury is a word: that word is 'hybrid'.

Most unfortunately this word originally became associated with

the old all-American hybrids, Noah, Othello, Clinton, Isabel, and so forth. Many of them are still grown in America. To the conservative Frenchman in the wine trade, by tradition 'hybrid' is synonymous with bad wine. It is proving difficult indeed to overcome this prejudice. The association of growers interested in the new vines is trying to drop this word 'hybrid' and substitute '*nouveaux cépages français*'—a bad choice, because it is long and clumsy.

When, over a quarter of a century ago, it became desirable to stop the planting of the old all-American hybrids which were seriously lowering the quality of European wines, the French law, and similar laws in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Hungary, Austria, and Yugoslavia specifically named the varieties which were to become illegal. But the German law of 1930 did not: it simply referred to 'American hybrids'; and although it is absurd to compare the new French hybrids with the old American ones, yet because the new French ones do owe their disease resistance and other qualities to a small proportion of American genes, that law can be used to dam the flood of French wine at the frontier, free-trade notwithstanding.

About 40 per cent. of France's vineyard acreage is planted with the new vines. Ordinary wine produced in a given region may be pure *vinifera*, pure hybrid, or a blend of both. The blending may be of the must in the winepress; or of made wine. And since business is business, we cannot expect exporters to refrain from declaring as pure *vinifera* wine a shipment which contains a proportion of hybrid wine. So the German authorities found themselves in need of a method of testing wine which would reveal the presence of a hybrid component. They were provided with such a test by the most distinguished living oinological chemist.

### A Matter of Pigment

This is Dr. Ribereau-Gayon, whose laboratory is in Bordeaux. He had been working on the pigments in wines and he noticed that stains of hybrid wines on paper, placed under ultra-violet light, gave a pink fluorescence. As he had never noticed any such fluorescence from stains of *vinifera* wines, he rather hastily concluded that he had a means of distinguishing the one from the other. This fluorescence was apparently owing to certain diglucocides present in the hybrid grapes, but not in pure *vinifera* grapes. There were loud cries of joy from the anti-hybrid lobby in France itself; and the German authorities seized on the Ribereau-Gayon test as the very thing they needed. The consequences have been disconcerting to all concerned and diverting to those who are not. For it was soon demonstrated, first by Flauzy at the Narbonne oinological station of the Académie d'Agriculture, that a more careful use of chromatography revealed diglucocides in wine made from some of the most respected old *vinifera* varieties in France.

Worse was to follow. Close upon the news of Flauzy's discovery came the revelation, from a different and equally respectable laboratory, that in some hybrid varieties the diglucocides are so localized in the grape skins that they could be made to yield a wine showing no pink fluorescence under ultra-violet light. This wine will, therefore, pass the German frontier as readily as the purest *vinifera* wine: while the immaculate *vinifera* wine of those noble old varieties Alicante Bouschet, Morastel Bouschet, and Grand Noir de la Calmette, occupying 125,000 acres of French vineyard, will be, and in fact has been, turned back in disgrace.

The association concerned to push the new vines is moving heaven and earth in the Common Market committees to have the German law amended. For the time being even their French opponents are badly shaken, though I do not think they are beaten. But in the long run they cannot win. The fact is the new vines mean more, better, and cheaper ordinary wine from a smaller acreage, an advantage so great that they will impose themselves.

—Third Programme

Patrick Lynch and John Vaizey are the authors of *Guinness's Brewery in the Irish Economy 1759-1876*, published by the Cambridge University Press (35s.).

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*Two to Five in High Flats.* The results of an inquiry into play provided for children aged two to five years living in high flats have been published by the Housing Centre, 13 Suffolk Street, London, S.W.1, from which it can be obtained for 3s. post free.



# The Resurrection Men

CHRISTOPHER RICKS on the revival of dead metaphors

IT is easy to tell when a new approach to poetry or a new critical idea has got itself really accepted. You will find it turning up all the time in book-reviews. Or if you are a teacher of literature, you will find it turning up in essays or discussions. And, by now, exactly this has happened with the idea that in a lot of good poetry, dead metaphors are brought to life. Let me give an example. Any of us can now talk about *goad*ing someone into a fury—but we do not usually have much idea of the real force of the word, of what a goad is. We do not see ourselves sticking a spike into a reluctant ox. But when Alexander Pope uses the word, he makes sure that we feel the real sting of the goad; and he does this by putting it in the same line as the word 'stall', suggesting *cattle* as it does. So Pope's wit will 'goad the prelate slumbering in his stall'. Yes, a prelate has a stall, but then so has an ox; the churchman is like a great sleepy beast, and the goad has a real sting in it.

This is obviously an important way of looking at words, and it helps with a real critical difficulty. Ever since Aristotle, most critics have agreed that 'the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor'. As Aristotle went on to say, 'It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others; and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars'. Obviously there have always been countless poets of whom this was perfectly true. So although we are perpetually astonished by the imagination of Shakespeare, it is often not difficult to see how the poetry works. It works because he suddenly makes us see that leafless branches are astonishingly like 'bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang'. For the critic, trying to understand why some poetic effects are so moving, the difficulty came with all those other poets whose works did not seem to use much metaphor. And that is why we all have cause to be grateful to those pioneers who first developed the idea of 'dead metaphors brought to life'. I am thinking in particular of Mr. Owen Barfield, whose book *Poetic Diction* first came out in 1928, and of Mr. Donald Davie, who published *Purity of Diction in English Verse* in 1952. It is they who, more than anybody else, are responsible for the production and distribution of this useful tool for the critic.

## A Misused Tool

But the trouble with tools is that you cannot stop people mis-using them. And it may be that it is now time, not to throw away the tool, but to be a little more strict about how it is used. After all, the same thing has happened with most of the other interesting developments in twentieth-century criticism. Mr. Empson showed that *some* poetry is good because it suggests more than one thing at a time—we have a bargain; two for the price of one. But then it did sometimes look as if Mr. Empson were saying that all good poetry is ambiguous; and certainly some of the critics who have learned from him do not seem to make very discriminating use of the tool which he developed. It has been much the same with the Shakespearean criticism of Mr. Wilson Knight. He pointed out the powerful effects which Shakespeare gains through using chains of imagery, sequences of metaphor. But then he too sometimes spoke, and his disciples often speak, as if there were nothing but chains of imagery in Shakespeare's plays—as if they were not full of fascinating characters and striking events. The first fine careless rapture of those discoveries is now over, and people are (we hope) turning to the necessary job of sifting the excitingly *true* from the merely exciting. The same job will have to be done with 'dead metaphors brought to life': not, I think, as a matter of theory, but as a series of particular cases.

The two questions which have to be asked are simple. When the critic has pointed to what he says is 'a dead metaphor brought to life', we must ask: has this really happened? and is it a good thing if it has? Let me deal with the second question first, because

it may seem the more elementary one. We may think that the critic would not have bothered to point it out unless he thought it was a good thing—but we cannot be sure of that. He may have been trying to explain why a particular poem did not work for him. But surely, then, live words are always preferable to dead ones? Surely we must always prefer the writing which makes us fully aware of exactly what the words mean, to that slack writing which uses words in a flat and empty way? The answer is that, just as life is usually preferable to death—but not always—so live writing is usually preferable to dead. Other things being equal, we properly prefer live writing. But there are times when other things are not equal, and there are good and bad ways of being alive—perhaps I should say, appropriate and inappropriate ways. We may meet the verbal equivalent of Frankenstein's monster; he was alive all right.

## 'At Death's Door'

Take, for example, the cliché 'at death's door'. As it is ordinarily used, this means no more than 'near death': the door is almost entirely forgotten. But would it *always* be better if the door were remembered, if the dead metaphor were brought back to life? What about a funeral sermon? Would we be pleased if the preacher said: 'He lay at death's door. But he could not see into the future—there is no key-hole in death's door'? Certainly that would bring the dead metaphor to life; but, in this case, the wrong sort of life. Ninety-nine people out of a hundred would prefer the flat emptiness of the usual phrase, to the forced, self-conscious and inappropriate 'life' of the other. And the point would be just the same if we thought, not of a funeral sermon, but of a funeral elegy. In other words, we cannot, unfortunately, make up our minds that bringing the dead back to life is always a good thing in poetry; we have to ask 'Even if it has happened, is it a good thing?' And this means that we have to decide what kind of poem we are faced with, so that we do not make the mistake of assuming that something is strikingly beautiful when it is only striking. It may be strikingly grotesque.

But the other question is more important. 'Has the dead metaphor really been brought to life?' And it does seem to me that even the most skilful users of this tool have not always been strict enough in asking this question. Only too often we are given, not an interesting insight which is then substantiated, but an interesting insight. The assumption too often seems to be that if a poem is better when read in this way, then this is the way to read it. But there are all sorts of poems which are better if you read them in flat defiance of the author's wishes. There are all sorts of pompous, bathetic poems which might be quite good if we felt that they were meant to be jokes. We may privately enjoy them as jokes; but if we were going to write about them publicly, as critics, we would have to study them as pompous and bathetic. In the same way there are dead metaphors brought to life, and there are dead metaphors. If a writer uses enough clichés, it is likely that some time or other one of them will find itself accidentally in a context which seems to bring it to life. But then that would be just an accident, an interesting one perhaps. Any beauty in it would be the creation of the imaginative critic, not of an imaginative poet. We would think that the critic was reading subtlety into the poem, rather than the poet writing it in.

## Two Different Reactions

So we must ask for substantiation as well as insight. But where is this to come from? The most obvious place is the rest of the poem. And from there we radiate in wider and wider circles—the other poems by the same author, the poetry and language of his age, and so on. It is hard work, and often boring work, to find

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# B.B.C. NEWS HEADLINES

May 24-30

## Wednesday, May 24

The German Federal Republic to be allowed to build bigger destroyers than any Britain has at present

Mr. Butler says that his remarks about Spain have been exaggerated

## Thursday, May 25

In a message to Congress, President Kennedy makes an urgent request for more money to meet new commitments in space exploration, foreign aid, national and civil defence, and in combating unemployment at home

King Hussein of Jordan marries Miss Toni Gardiner in Amman

More than a hundred prominent people urge Britain to join the Common Market

## Friday, May 26

Vickers-Armstrongs sign a contract worth more than £4 million with a Russian import organization for a plant that will make nylon fibre

President Kennedy proposes a single agency to administer American foreign aid

## Saturday, May 27

United States delegation to the Geneva Conference on Laos accuses the pro-Communist Pathet Lao forces of a 'systematic violation' of the cease-fire in Laos during the last two weeks

Roman Catholic priests in Malta are instructed not to give absolution to people sympathizing with the Malta Labour Party and its leader Mr. Mintoff

## Sunday, May 28

Before leaving Lisbon for Madrid, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Home, describes the talks that he has had with the Portuguese Prime Minister, Dr. Salazar, as 'long, useful, and very frank'

Explosions wreck three unattended telephone and cable relay stations in Utah in the United States

An interim report of the Committee of Inquiry into the electricity black-out in south-eastern England a fortnight ago explains that one of the main causes of it was a heavy demand in an area not fully connected to the country's super-grid

## Monday, May 29

In Paris General Challe and General Zeller appear on trial before a special military tribunal on charges of illegally assuming command in Algeria and provoking an insurrection against the state

Lord Amory to be Britain's new High Commissioner in Canada

## Tuesday, May 30

Lord Home calls on General Franco in Madrid. The Prime Minister tells Commons that the informal remarks made in Spain by Mr. Butler were entirely in accord with Government policy

United Arab Republic says it will not recognize the Republic of South Africa

British trawler fired on by a Danish fishery protection vessel off the Faroes



A photograph of Princess Margaret taken when she visited the Royal National Throat, Nose, and Ear Hospital in London on May 25. An announcement from Kensington Palace the same day said that Her Royal Highness was expecting her first child in the autumn



Above: a view of part of the Queen Elizabeth II grand stand at Ascot, showing how the clock belonging to the old grand stand has been incorporated into the new building

Right: part of Castlemartin camp, South Wales, which may be used by German tanks and troops as a military training ground this autumn

King Hussein of Jordan and his bride, Toni Gardiner, on their wedding day

Above: The Princess Margaret, Duchess of Kent, and Lady Kitty, at the wedding of King Hussein of Jordan

Right: The retinue of the King and Queen of Jordan, including the bride, Toni Gardiner, in traditional robes of process





ing through Amman in an open car with Muna Toni Gardiner, after their marriage on May 25

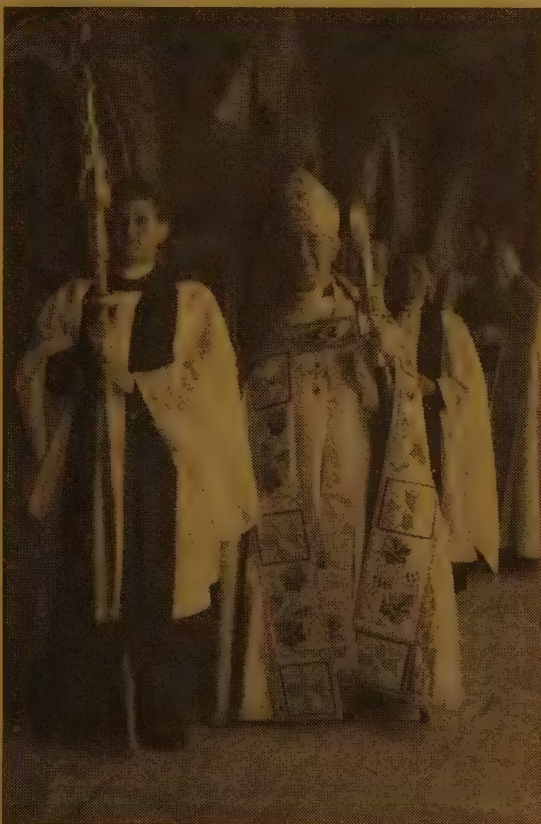


The Queen's Colours of the Imperial Light Horse being marched through Johannesburg on May 24 to be laid up for the last time, now that South Africa has withdrawn from the Commonwealth



Mr. Harold Macmillan, looking at 'Shamrock cow', on May 25, the day he opened the June at the Royal Exchange, London

op of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, in his ng his last official ceremony at Canterbury fore his retirement on May 28



A B.58 Hustler bomber of the United States Air Force being refuelled during a flight from New York to Paris which it made on May 26 in three hours and nineteen minutes



The baby giraffe, April, seen this week with her mother, Maggie, at Whipsnade Zoo. She was born on April 25



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such substantiation; but it will make all the difference between two reactions in a reader. On the one hand, 'how marvellous that the poet meant that'. On the other, 'how marvellous if he meant that'.

I can give two examples from Mr. Geoffrey Tillotson's essay on eighteenth-century poetic diction. Pope in his 'Pastorals' described the sheep at dawn poured over 'the whitening vale'. Mr. Tillotson points out that this is a stock phrase. But he adds that Pope makes it new by using whitening not just to mean the light of dawn, but also to mean the whiteness of the sheep colouring the valley. Here is inert language brought to life; and then the insight is substantiated by three examples from later poets using 'white' in this way. This is not proof, but we cannot expect proof; and we are at any rate offered substantiation. Later Mr. Tillotson quotes from Thomson's 'Seasons'; it is a winter scene in which the animals are called the 'brown inhabitants'—a phrase which sounds like the dearest of diction but which he defends by saying that their 'brownness is the most evident thing about them in the snow'. My feeling this time is: 'How pleasant if that were so'. But what about substantiation? What about questions like: Does Thomson use this same phrase anywhere else? or similar phrases? Is he a poet who is sensitive to words, and in particular to inert pieces of diction? It may be that these questions could be answered in a way which would suggest that it was Thomson, and not just Mr. Tillotson, who saw the 'brown inhabitants' against the snow. But the questions

have to be asked. Meanwhile, I am not sure that the example shows anything more than that Mr. Tillotson is skilful at artificial respiration.

The same is sometimes true of Mr. Davie. In talking about Pope and dead metaphor, or Dr. Johnson, we feel that both these poets show themselves on innumerable occasions to be sensitive to words—and to be afraid of clichés. So if Mr. Davie points out how the context invigorates something which might otherwise have seemed to be just cliché, we do not think it is only an accident. But when Mr. Davie writes about Goldsmith, things are more doubtful. Even if one admires—and enjoys—Goldsmith as much as I do, it is hard to feel confident that he was always as alert as Mr. Davie thinks. And in his latest book, *The Heyday of Sir Walter Scott*, Mr. Davie offers even less substantiation of his insights, which are interesting and sometimes even profound. For example, he quotes a description by Fenimore Cooper of two eagles, in the course of which Cooper refers to 'these monarchs of the air', 'these kings of birds'. Mr. Davie insists that these phrases are not 'slackly conventional', and brings out their relevance: 'the image of the eagles serves as a sort of emblem of the hierarchy observed in the bird-kingdom, until disrupted by the human beings who cannot in their own society observe the same discipline and order'. This relevance is fine if it is really there; but does Mr. Davie 'bring it out' or does he bring it in? Once again the questions throng in: how often does Cooper talk about 'monarchs of the air', or use similar phrases? Has he got this sort of alertness to words, especially to conventional diction?

I would like to end with a quotation in which

there is an astonishing effect which I am sure is completely accidental. The keen critic would be able to deduce all sorts of subtle ironies from it; in fact, it would be the easiest thing in the world. But I am sure the author was blissfully unconscious of any such effect (even, if I may so put it, in his subconscious). The author is John Aubrey, whose *Brief Lives* are written in the style of a child who has never been told what, conventionally, you may and may not do with words. The result is full of superb and fascinating accidents—like the uninstructed attempts to speak a foreign language. The following is all one sentence; it tells of the death of Sir Fulke Greville:

which was that a servant of his (that had long wayted on him, and his Lordship had often told him that he would doe something for him, but did not, but still putt him off with delayes) as he was trussing up his Lord's pointes coming from Stoole (for then their breeches were fastned to the doublets with points; then came in hookes and eies; which not to have fastned was in my boy-hood a great crime) stabbed him.

What a sentence! And how extraordinarily the 'great crime' of not doing up your breeches is brought right up against the really great crime of murder! But Aubrey was not concerned to bring back to life that little social cliché 'a great crime'. It is just that his mind wandered rather easily. He was, as they knew at the time, 'roving and maggotty-headed, and sometimes little better than crazed'. And before we talk about 'briggung dead metaphors to life', we ought to feel sure that we are looking at a piece of writing which is nearer to Pope than to Aubrey.

—Third Programme

## The Gracious Guard

By C. DAY LEWIS

A FEW YEARS AGO I gave a poetry recital in Derby. After the recital I took a train back to Sheffield, where I was staying—one of those midnight trains that seem to be composed largely of empty goods vans. I had hardly sat down in my third-class compartment when the guard appeared. 'Professor Day Lewis' he said, 'wouldn't you prefer to sit in a first-class compartment?' Brushing aside my protest that I only had a third-class ticket, he led me along the empty train to a first-class coach, dusted off a seat, and installed me in solitary grandeur. 'Thank you very much', I said, 'but how did you know my name?' 'Oh', he replied, 'I attended your poetry-reading'. I asked him which poems he had liked best. He said he had been particularly interested by the passages I had read from Meredith's 'Modern Love'.

'You admire Meredith's poetry?'

'I'm interested in it', he replied: 'you see, my great-aunt (I think it was great-aunt he said) was Mr. Meredith's housekeeper at Box Hill'. We chatted a bit more. Then he thought it was about time to get his train moving. At the door of the compartment he turned. 'It's an honour to have you on my train, Professor Day Lewis', he said.

There are several comments to be made about that episode. First, I cannot imagine anything—

short of getting the O.M.—more gloriously honorific than to be told by a guard that it is an honour to have you on his train: more gratifying for a poet, anyway—royalty, cabinet ministers, and pop singers no doubt are accustomed to such compliments. Then, how rewarding that a guard should have come to a poetry-reading: no poet wants his audience to be composed exclusively of intellectuals or confirmed poetry-addicts: a poem should speak to anyone and everyone—and it can, if only they will take the trouble to listen. Besides, I have a special feeling for guards, ever since one took me into his guard's van when I was a boy and let me operate the brake wheel. It was a small, slow train in Norfolk; and I am of a generation that still finds railways romantic. I particularly love travelling by those small, slow, country trains that stop at every station (what's the hurry anyway?)—the kind of train that lays itself down alongside a platform, panting gently in the midsummer silence, as if it likes the place and proposes to stay there for ever.

But what delights me most about the episode of the guard at Derby is its outrageous element of coincidence. What a fantastic coincidence that I should have read those poems by Meredith and immediately boarded a train whose guard's great-aunt had been Meredith's housekeeper! If you

put it into a novel, readers would feel it to be hopelessly fictional, unrealistic: people grumble when they find a novelist relying upon coincidence for his plot. Yet in real life there is far too much coincidence lying about for it to be, so to speak, a coincidence. I myself love the idea of coincidence—the unexpected, chance meeting of things which by all the laws of averages, dynamics, mechanics, astronomy, psychology, what you will, should never have come within miles of meeting—I love it as much as I love small, slow, cross-country trains.

I am fond of coincidences, first because they cock a snook at all mechanistic, determinist philosophy. They don't disprove it, of course; but at least they make a rude gesture at it. We are inclined to be overawed nowadays by the doctrine that our genes and our early environment have so entirely conditioned us that any choice you make, any action you take, is—you being you—inevitable; free will is an illusion; every choice or action is predetermined by a continuous line of cause and effect within you. Coincidence breaks that line, or seems to, because it represents an intervention of the unpredictable: it says, 'one thing does not necessarily lead to another': it proffers a meeting, a relationship, which cannot be accounted for by any rational theory. As though two engines, running



obediently on two different sets of metals, should leap the tracks, puff across the countryside towards each other, and touch buffers; pure, charming, absurd chance!

The modern physicist, I am delighted to tell you, allows a certain play, a certain 'give', in the otherwise rigid laws of nature. Coincidence, pure chance, is to me a poetic image of that play. And it is often playful—a sort of irresponsible, cosmic joker: sometimes a malignant joker. Given all the circumstances and specifications, it was deemed predictable that the 'Titanic' on her maiden voyage would not meet an iceberg and could not be sunk by one. But she did, and she was. Thomas Hardy wrote a poem about it, 'The Convergence of the Twain'. He imagines that, while the 'smart ship' is building, 'The Immanent Will that stirs and urges everything Prepared a sinister mate for her—so gaily great—A Shape of Ice, for the time far and dissociate'. Ship and iceberg become 'twin halves of one august event'. And that is another way of looking at coincidence: to see it, not as pure chance, but as the work of some Power whose intentions we cannot fathom and whose operations we cannot predict. This is fundamentally a religious attitude: chance is elevated by Hardy into a purposive kind of fate. You may call it superstitious; at any rate, many poets have to feel that way.

### The Conception of a Poem

As a poet, I have a special reason for respecting chance. The conception of a poem is an extraordinarily chancy thing. A year or two ago, I was brooding a lot about possessions: how, when I was young, I thought one should travel light; I detested my elders' passion to possess things—and to possess people, and the belief (it's a good deal more common now) that to possess a car, a telly, a semi-detached, etc., etc., somehow increases not just one's status but one's value as a human being. I felt that the pleasure of having is a very poor substitute for the joy of living. But now I find myself rather fond of possessions; and I notice that, the older one gets, the more attached to them one becomes—as if they were extensions of one's personality. And it struck me how strange it is that I should become more

involved with possessions the nearer I approach to death—to the journey which I have to travel light.

I was thinking on those lines when, quite unbidden, out of the blue, some words came into my head: 'Streamlined whales and hulls'. Now what on earth had that to do with the subject of my meditation? But the phrase soon expanded itself into 'Think of streamlined whales and hulls Accumulating barnacles By moving long enough immersed In their own element'. And there I had the beginnings of a poem (it is called 'Travelling Light') about accumulating possessions, which would never have been conceived if that phrase 'streamlined whales and hulls' had not by some lucky chance wandered into my head.

### 'Inspiration' or 'Chance'?

It may well be that in a hundred, or a thousand, years' time, neurologists will be able to explain the pattern of electric charges in the brain which produces such strange meetings as the one that took place when my abstract thought about possessions was, so to say, fertilized by an apparently random and irrelevant phrase, 'streamlined whales and hulls'. One could call it 'inspiration', I suppose: but that is a question-begging word: like 'Providence'. When a person has cancelled his reservation on an airliner that crashes, or on the 'Titanic', it is natural that he should feel indebted to Providence. But what was Providence doing about all the people who did not cancel their reservations? No, I prefer the idea of lucky or unlucky chance to the idea of a Providence which arranges for me to be saved while the others are drowned or burnt alive.

I began with a queer coincidence. I will end with another one. Last year I published an autobiography in which there was reproduced a photograph of the house in Ballintubber, a tiny Irish village, where I was born. We left this house when I was two. For fifty years and more I had neither seen the house nor heard anything about it. Shortly after the autobiography was published, I came out of a studio in London, where my wife and I had been giving a broadcast. As we came out, a door on the other side

of the passage opened, and a man emerged. The three of us went down in the lift together, and my wife introduced me to him: he turned out to be the actor, Sebastian Shaw. He said he had been reading my book: he was so glad to meet me—he would never have got round to writing to me about it—because one thing in the book had particularly interested him. 'What was that?' I asked. 'Well, you see', he said, 'I now own the house in which you were born'.

### An Unexpected Bonus

Just think of the astronomical odds against my emerging from a studio in Broadcasting House at the same instant that a total stranger emerged from the studio opposite—a man who chanced to own the house where I was born fifty-six years ago—a house of which I had no memory, no knowledge, only a faded photograph. Yes, you may say, an odd coincidence; but surely a very unimportant one: what significance could possibly be attached to it? What is it supposed to prove? Why, nothing. Why should it have to prove anything? Of course, you cannot base any scientific law upon coincidence: its whole nature is that it is *agin* the law. And isn't that why it pleases us so? When something happens like my encounter with Sebastian Shaw or my meeting with the gracious guard of the Derby-Sheffield train, your heart leaps up: you feel as if you had been given an unexpected bonus—life still has surprises in store: anything, absolutely anything, can happen. It is the same leap of the heart that a poet feels when two utterly different, dissociate, miles-apart things—streamlined whales and the love of possessions—come together in his mind and marry. And I fancy we are particularly heartened by such improbable comings-together because they suggest that there is potential relationship between everything—everything in us and everything in the universe. Coincidence, which seems to flout law, at the same time paradoxically hints at the idea of pattern, of a vast network in which everything is connected with everything else, in which extremes do meet.

Or put it simply like this—so long as things happen that have no right to happen, there is hope for us all.—*Home Service*

## Where?

Where is the close and moonbound wood  
In which you wait for me  
(Other than in the real past  
Or mock-futurity)?  
In what subsoil of longing grow  
Shadow, mossbed and tree?

My days are harsh with sun, my nights  
Drag past without a sound;  
I lie awake and watch the sky,  
The moon in darkness drowned;  
Iron stars come out and throw  
Their useless light around.

But when the furtive moonlight fills  
Despair's interstices,  
I sleep, and my awaking joy  
Peers timidly and sees  
Wild mist like ivy winding round  
The vast evasive trees,

The packed exploding leaves on which  
We lie awake all night,  
My absent body twisting in  
Love's dear and brutal fight,  
And twisted too your absent smile  
In the distorting light.

LAURENCE LERNER

## Boredom

Somewhere (yes, I know where,  
No, I won't tell you where)  
Well-fed, warm and at ease  
Lying late in a bed  
Out of a window I  
Watch a dead station-wall.  
Scene one: nothing, as yet.

Next, through wet streets I walk,  
Rinsed out after the rain.  
Someone (no, I don't know

Who, but only her—yes)  
Walks in front of me, well  
Wrapped up after the rain.  
Scene two: all right, you win.

Somehow (well, you know how,  
You've been there in your time)  
Women's fingers that lock  
Lock and lock and lock. Well,  
Then, upstairs to a room  
Bang up against a wall.  
Scene three: back as you were.

Scene four: (is there a fourth?  
No, it just peters out).  
Why does every affair  
Sometimes (looking around  
One's life) seem to involve  
Just the same station-wall  
Seen from bed in the rain?

GEORGE MACBETH



# The Last Michelangelo

By MICHAEL AYRTON

THE LAST WORK of Michelangelo is called the 'Rondanini Pietà', and it is unfinished because it could not be finished. In this carving, which seems so slender, so weightless, Michelangelo resolved—or rejected—a conflict which he had fought out for three-quarters of his life on the battleground of the nude human figure. And I believe that this work prompts a speculation—perhaps an impertinent one—about the nature of his genius, which earned him the title of 'divine' from his contemporaries.

Michelangelo was concerned—to the virtual exclusion of everything else—with three things: weight, thrust, and articulation. His obsession with these attributes gave him the governance of energy on a scale hitherto unknown.

I want to consider what was left unfinished in Michelangelo's work: not the things which were thwarted by circumstance, by contracts modified or abandoned, by political contingencies, or the caprice of princes or the deaths of popes, but what he left unfinished because it was impossible to finish. His contemporaries thought Michelangelo the greatest artist who had ever lived; his personal success was perhaps the greatest there has ever been in the visual arts, and in the teeth of this triumph he lived in such desolation of spirit that he said he 'walked from dark to dark' and 'lived upon his death'. This seeming paradox was caused, I believe, by the setting of a simple but inescapable trap—a trap which is sprung when a man is so isolated that he becomes inextricably involved with *himself*—from loneliness not from pride. When this occurs he begins a war he cannot win, for he has no opponents.

For the last thirty years of his life Michelangelo had no rivals. With Raphael and Leonardo dead, he lived on—the survivor from a golden age—a man whose name remains identified with the very idea of the Renaissance. Yet he stood strangely apart from it and did not share, in one enormously significant way, in its spirit. He disdained *the particular*, that intoxication with the particularity of things and people and their appearances, which was a joy to the fifteenth-century Florentines. This was to them a tangible miracle. They grasped at it like a new and shining toy, and disciplined it with new and rediscovered laws of perspective and harmony. Everything visible in Renaissance art is clean, sharp, new—a discovery. Portraiture, the study of the appearance of particular people and the distinctive differences between them, was reborn in this time and landscape—the familiar fields and hills—was a new marvel which inspired in Leonardo da Vinci so intense a curiosity that he studied the stratification of rocks and the structure of wayside flowers to come at it. Leonardo treasured these pristine facts for their own sake. These things meant nothing to Michelangelo—he rejected portraiture. Landscape to him was nothing but a bleak platform for activity. His people do not ride horses or pick flowers, or wear fine clothes. When they are clothed at all it is in austere draperies designed to emphasize

the power of their movements. They do not live in houses, they inhabit the void. They move in limbo and there they move mountains.

The male nude, the trunk, limbs, and head of a Titan—these were all that Michelangelo



'Pietà' by Michelangelo, in the Palazzo Rondanini, Rome

needed. The block of marble was his house; the human torso his landscape. His sculptured saints and martyrs do not eat or drink or sleep in beds. They do not have financial problems nor are they surprised by spring sunshine. They are forces: enormous, protean forces held in dignity by their creator and governable only by their creator. Christ in judgment could exalt the just and thrust the damned into hell with a single movement of his shoulders.

In the core of stone from which Michelangelo released these beings (and even his painted figures seem to be born in stone) lay the weight. In the stone was imprisoned the thrust which only he could release. He governed that release by the

most precise knowledge of the articulation of bone and muscle. Yet not all of his figures are released. Some of them are held in a strange chancery. They struggle to come out. They move inside the marble but they are captives. They are captives of doubt. This is the trap.

A man so raised by genius above his fellow men and even above their institutions has three judges only: one is Time—and we know time by the judgment of Michelangelo; one is God who delivers no judgment until time stops; the third is the most immediate: the third judge of such a man is himself.

Michelangelo, caught in his own judgment, lacking any other on earth, condemned himself by lodging his appeal with God: the world stood in awed admiration of everything he did but where in the world could he find comfort? He looked for it in the image of the human body, man in God's image, and he made the male torso contain everything, the whole rich and various world the Renaissance had discovered. All this he crammed back into the cage of a man's ribs. But can even a Michelangelo do this without straining the human image beyond breaking point—without it splintering in his mind? I think he could not.

I think, however marvellous and even inevitable his achievement looks to us, that finally he could not, and therefore was not to be comforted. His vision transcended even his enormous abilities as he sat in judgment on himself.

Michelangelo was a frail and sickly man despite the strength in his huge shoulders. He had stomach trouble; and in his old age his eyes grew weak. He was not exactly handsome with his broken nose. He was rich but lived in squalor, often sleeping in his clothes; but then he slept little, for sleep gave him headaches. He was a homosexual—this least effeminate of men—and above all he was fierce, terrible, bitterly frightening. Pope Leo X called him 'terrifying' and *terribilità* was the word most used about his work. Yet in his sonnets it is his humility which is terrible, and in them he struggles to reach out to other human beings and to cut himself free from the stone. 'By sculpture', he once said, 'I understand an art which operates by taking away superfluous material'. And just as he struck away the superfluous material from his sculpture he struck at the superfluous self in his sonnets.

The Greeks had legends of giants chained above and below the earth. Tityus was one of them, and Michelangelo drew him; this drawing would serve equally to represent Prometheus who suffered a similar fate, and the legend of Prometheus is the story of Michelangelo. Prometheus was a Titan who stole a spark of divine fire from the Gods and revealed it to men so that thereafter men knew many of the secrets of the Gods, and were changed. For this crime Prometheus was chained to the summit of a mountain for thirty years, and the god Zeus sent an eagle to gnaw his liver. Michelangelo was a Titan and an immortal and he spent the



last thirty years of his life chained to the summit of the Renaissance, gnawed by the eagle he had made of his own conscience. This chained man, who dealt in Titans chained in the heart of stone and who governed the greatest chained energy ever known in the visual arts, was Prometheus—the archetype of genius he became the archetype of *the artist*, in that from then on the artist was separated from normal men.

From the beginning, men have made images. They made them to gain power by magic over the unknown—over the weather, over animals, over their antagonists. They made them to celebrate victory, to propitiate the gods, to subdue demons, to conquer death. They made them to understand what could be seen and reveal what could not, and make it governable, and they still do so. But these rituals came to be performed as priests and princes dictated, and image-makers were concerned with power outside themselves, so that as men when they failed they failed in the judgment of other men.

Michelangelo, the second Prometheus, added a new dimension to this mystery. He took the image-maker and changed him and he altered the spectator and disquieted him, so that however much or little of the divine fire those who come after Michelangelo possess, they inherit the self-doubts and some part of the chains.

The last work of Michelangelo, now called the 'Rondanini Pietà', was begun in 1552. It

seems likely that we possess a drawing that shows how it was intended to look. In it the Virgin struggles to lift the inert body of her dead son. Here Michelangelo is still obsessed with weight and thrust—with the torso of the world—and the weight of relentless judgment, self-condemning; this is Michelangelo walking from dark to dark. Sometime in the same year he abandoned the work and turned to another *pietà* which he intended for his own tomb. He attacked the stone with such fury that a witness tells us it seemed about to fly in pieces, and each stroke of mallet on chisel 'brought down fragments three or four fingers in breadth'. Eventually he broke the stone, abandoned the work unfinished, and turned back to the 'Rondanini Pietà'. He recarved it totally.

From the slumped but hugely muscled figure of Christ he carved away the torso so drastically that the disembodied arm (which still remains attached to the stone and is part of the earlier version) is some eight inches away from the new and frail trunk of the dead. Something extraordinary has happened. The great torso has been hewn away until it seems as fragile as a willow wand. From Christ's left shoulder a whole new arm and hand have been fashioned for the Virgin. The hand is only carved a few millimetres deep but it expresses everything that is needed. The Virgin needs no strength now to hold up her son. He has no weight. She makes

no effort. Her head which once strained upwards is now gently bowed, but on her headdress there still remains the eye and the bridge of the nose from the earlier head—a ghost from ten years before. The living and the dead are clasped together like overlapping shadows. Their features are veiled, hidden in the stone, undefined.

Only the dead and passive legs are brought to completion where they slope gently down the long, sleeping thighs into the marvellous articulation of the knees—and thus move on downwards back into the stone. They are drained these figures, drained of strength, drained of grief, drained of struggle, drained even of death. It is unfinished—it could never be finished—but it is finished. All the superfluous material is gone, all the superfluous pain. The energy that had burst outwards during all Michelangelo's life flows away. It has now poured back into its matrix. The chains which bound him to his mountain top seem to have melted away.

On February 12, 1564, Michelangelo worked all day standing and cutting at the stone, fighting against time. Two days later a friend found him standing alone in the street in pouring rain. He said 'I am ill and can find no peace'. Yet in the 'Rondanini Pietà' there was a peace of a kind he had never been given before. On February 18 Michelangelo died. He was eighty-nine years old.

—'Monitor' (B.B.C. Television)

## Letters to the Editor

### Republicanism in South Africa

Sir,—Mr. S. A. Cilliers, in his talk on 'Republicanism in South Africa' (THE LISTENER, May 25), offered a persuasive picture of a moderate and indeed almost imperceptible change. His picture may convince listeners who are not aware of the cataclysmic change which the Republic in fact represents, and the dismay and even despair which its coming has widely created within South Africa.

It would be tedious to examine the process by which this impression is conveyed. One example may illustrate the general tendency. Mr. Cilliers says that 'the equality of English and Afrikaans . . . remains entrenched'. He fails to note, however, that the enlargement of the Senate for the purpose of removing the entrenchment of the Coloured franchise on the common roll opened a high road to the disregard of the original entrenchments of the South Africa Act, and that in fact the very concept of 'entrenchment' has been set aside in favour of the 'sovereignty of Parliament', which means quite simply the unfettered right of a bare majority to do what it wishes.

But there is one omission which deserves special mention, for it is quite astonishing that it should have occurred. Mr. Cilliers says: 'One fact cannot be argued away: a major constitutional change was effected with no more than a 4 per cent. majority of the enfranchised population'. This seems frank enough. But nowhere in his talk does Mr. Cilliers inform his listeners of another and more startling fact: that no 'enfranchised voter' with a coloured skin was allowed to take part in the referendum.

The effect of this is to create a new state by a decision from which every non-white person has been excluded as a matter of principle. Even those Coloured voters whom the Nationalists have thought fit to leave as enfranchised voters have been told that their views about the form of the new State are irrelevant. By this act the founders of the Republic openly proclaimed its racist basis. The effect of such a procedure on the non-white peoples of South Africa can be imagined easily enough. They have been transferred from one allegiance to another, and their consent—even their comment—has been ignored as a matter of principle.

This may indeed prove to be the most significant fact about the Republic, and it is strange indeed that Mr. Cilliers does not mention it.

Yours, etc.,

Skirraugh  
G. H. DURRANT  
(Professor of English, University of Natal)

### Kenya: the End of a Road

Sir,—Mr. H. P. Dow contrives to be callous about the European minority in Kenya, inaccurate as to fact, and offensive to me as an individual. It is a formidable hat-trick.

He wisecracks about 'Colonial Office interference', and strengthens my argument for me. We, the British electorate, Parliament and the Colonial Office have, in my view, neglected our responsibility and betrayed our trust. That neglect and that betrayal are basic causes of the European minority's bitterness. We, not they, have brought Kenya to this pass.

For those who are in so terrible a plight Mr. Dow's letter offers no word of pity, but a sneer

at their 'business miscalculations' and their 'intransigence'—an attitude which perplexes and saddens me. The emergency cost the taxpayers of Kenya £30,000,000. That of itself was a heavy price to pay for the anguish they experienced over the years. Mr. Dow wants to saddle them with his and my part of the bill, as well as blame them because it happened.

Finally, he says that he finds it hard to believe that I believed what I said. This is quite unwarrantable. I stated certain facts which I believe to be true, and Mr. Dow has not controverted one of them. I drew attention to the economic ruin and physical jeopardy which face my friends. Mr. Macleod and Mr. Hugh Fraser have subsequently admitted in public the existence of both these consequences of British policy. But it happened that on the very night, May 5, on which I spoke in Broadcasting House in London, Mrs. Osborne was horribly murdered in Kenya. It has come to few men, trying to tell the truth as they see it to have their statements so swiftly and so tragically vindicated. Can Mr. Dow now express no compassion for the dead girl, for her husband and her children, or would he regard that as an emotion not to be expended on an intransigent minority who are paying the penalty for their business miscalculations?

Yours, etc.,

London, S.W.1

JOHN CONNELL

### What is History?

Sir,—May I beg a few lines to reply to comments in your columns on my broadcasts 'What is History?' from Miss Wedgwood (May 4), Sir Isaiah Berlin (May 18) and Mr. Clibbens





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MEMBER OF THE BUILDING SOCIETIES ASSOCIATION



(May 25)? The points raised by Mr. Wheeler (May 11) and Mr. Eisler (May 18) are more fully covered in the complete text of my lectures; and I should like to defer discussion of them till this is published in the autumn.

What I attributed to Miss Wedgwood was 'the view that what matters in history is the character and behaviour of individuals'. As an old-fashioned example of this view, I cited the adage that 'history is the biography of great men'. I much regret that, in the shortened broadcast version of the lecture, it looked as if I attributed this view also to Miss Wedgwood; that was not my intention.

I noted, on the strength of a quotation from one of Miss Wedgwood's books, that she appeared to explain why individuals acted as they did exclusively in terms of their conscious motives; this I described as 'going about one's work with one eye wilfully shut'. Miss Wedgwood now protests that she does not make a practice of limiting herself in this way, but chose to do so in this particular book. Magnificent, perhaps—but not history.

I do not know why Sir Isaiah Berlin should chide me for contributing to journals which (like *THE LISTENER* at one time) prefer to publish anonymous reviews; I have never disclaimed authorship when asked, or used this medium to answer criticisms of my own work by Sir Isaiah or by others. I now face the grayer charge of misrepresenting him on three points; I hope he will believe that, if I have so offended, it has not been through lack of attention to what he has written. The opinions which I have falsely attributed to him are, in his words, (1) that 'determinism must be false', (2) that 'historians should not look for causes of human action', (3) that 'it is the positive duty of historians to give good and bad marks to the principal personages whose acts they discuss'.

(1) In *Historical Inevitability* (page 33) Sir Isaiah writes: 'I do not *here* [my italics] wish to say that determinism is necessarily false, only that we neither think nor speak as if it were true, and that it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to conceive what our picture of the world would be if we seriously believed it'. Over and over again, he seeks to show that determinism is incompatible with 'the notion of individual responsibility' (page 25), which he emphatically endorses. If these arguments do not lead to the conclusion that 'determinism must be false', I do not see where they lead.

(2) Sir Isaiah dismisses what he calls 'the modern plea for a greater effort at understanding' (page 46) on the ground that those who make this plea are involved in the fallacy that 'to explain is to understand and to understand is to justify' (page 42). This seemed to me to mean that the historian should not look for, say, underlying social or economic causes of the two world wars, lest he should in the process explain away the moral responsibility of Wilhelm II or Hitler or the German people.

(3) Sir Isaiah sharply dissents from the view (page 76) 'that it is foolish to judge Charlemagne or Napoleon or Genghis Khan or Hitler or Stalin for their massacres' and from the view that it is 'absurd' or 'not our business as historians' to praise 'benefactors of humanity'. I took this to mean that it is wise and sensible and our business as historians to award good or bad marks to outstanding figures of the past.

I have always found Sir Isaiah Berlin's essays

stimulating, and am sincerely sorry that I have got him wrong. But my bewilderment remains. When I wrote my lectures, I thought I knew where he stood on these three questions. Now, with the best will in the world, I simply do not know whether he rejects or accepts (1) determinism in the sense in which I used the term, (2) social causes of individual actions, (3) the duty of the historian to praise or blame individual historical personages.

The core of my disagreement with Sir Isaiah is, I think, the view; which he still holds (or am I wrong again?), that the hypothesis that individual actions are causally determined (which I accept) is incompatible with individual responsibility (which I also accept). Though I am no philosopher, I shall continue to suspect a flaw either in the premises or in the arguments which lead to this 'nonsensical' conclusion, *i.e.* a conclusion repugnant to common sense and common experience. Belief in this incompatibility, not (as Sir Isaiah suggests) belief in individual freedom and responsibility, is the 'dead horse' which, in my horrifyingly inelegant metaphor, he vainly tries to flog into life.

Mr. Clibbens assumes that the way to span the rift between the 'two cultures' is for historians to study elementary science (and vice versa). This is, I think, a fallacy. Scientists among themselves do not believe in this method: engineers do not feel it necessary to study the elements of plant biology.

Yours, etc.,

Cambridge

E. H. CARR

Sir,—There is something disarming in Mr. E. H. Carr's picture of himself as another Galilei, facing a bench of such obscurantist inquisitors as Sir Lewis Namier or Professor Popper (*THE LISTENER*, May 25) while boldly holding on to his Marxist belief in the pre-determined movement of history towards ever-increasing human self-awareness. Unfortunately he is more like Galilei's famous colleague who refused to look through a telescope. For Mr. Carr's polemics show him to be quite unwilling to inspect the real arguments of these critics of his faith. Reading his rather jejune meditations about Cleopatra's nose and the role of accidents in life and history (*THE LISTENER*, May 4) one began to wonder if he had even read Professor Popper's searching analysis, in *The Poverty of Historicism*, of the problem of causal explanation and prediction in the social sciences which he wanted to dispose of. For this analysis leads up to a theory of a 'logic of situations' which offers precisely what Mr. Carr seemed to be groping for.

If your readers now turn from Mr. Carr's presentation of the same philosopher's attitude to reason to the relevant chapters of *The Open Society and its Enemies* they will find, for instance, that not only has Professor Popper never advocated 'the subordination of reason to the assumptions of the existing order' but that he could not have done so in a book which champions the open society as the one that 'sets free the critical powers of man'. When Mr. Carr further asserts that 'we are specifically told that criticism of "ends" is excluded' he misses the basic distinction between facts and decisions on which Professor Popper's argument turns. It must indeed be more convenient for a man of his persuasion to refuse looking through the telescope of this analysis but as a historian Mr.

Carr should not treat his texts and sources so cavalierly.

Yours, etc.,

London, N.W.3

E. H. GOMBRICH

## Men in Motor-cars

Sir,—The following round figures might interest your correspondents. Each weekday, about 1,250,000 people travel to the City and West End. Of this total, 220,000 travel in 5,200 bus loads, and about 100,000 in 70,000 private cars. The remainder travel by tube or train.

The buses during duty occupy an area of approximately 1,250,000 square feet and the cars, while travelling and at rest, somewhere in the region of 10,000,000 square feet of public space. This is a very conservative estimate indeed, as parking alone could account for this. We may fairly assume that the space occupied by trade vehicles is of a similar order. As will be seen, each car occupant utilises about 100 square feet of space throughout the entire day, whereas the bus passenger occupies under 6 square feet and that only during the time he is travelling.

These figures serve to show who should shoulder the blame for inconvenience, congestion, and 'inefficient' public services. One can also envisage the state of affairs to come when—borne on the rising tide of prosperity and their own wheels—the remaining 900,000 decide to come to town.

Yours, etc.,

London, W.C.1

MARTIN HUTCHINSON

## Composers or Computers?

Sir,—I find Mr. Philip Laird's defence of his talk 'Composers or Computers?' (*THE LISTENER*, May 18) insecure.

(1) There is a fundamental contradiction in his first paragraph. On the one hand, he admits that serialism emerged from Schönberg's musical practice. On the other, he reverts to his earlier fallacy by saying that 'The law must be known before it can be strictly followed'. Why? Mr. Laird obeys laws, both physical and mental, without knowing he does so. We all do. So did Schönberg who, in his creative evolution, discovered serial technique *after* the musical event, not before.

(2) Far from being 'outside the point at issue' the problem of comprehensibility is essential to Mr. Laird's discussion. Does he experience 'imprecise forebodings about the future of composition' purely on the strength of his study of pre-compositional means? They might assume more definite shape if he concerned himself with creative ends instead.

(3) Mr. Laird professes not to know what is meant by predetermination in composition, in which case he should not talk about it. Indeed, in 'Composers or Computers?' he talked about very little else. Nor does he successfully avoid the implication that predetermination makes communication more difficult.

Art can never be free, but the first step towards deriving its limitations from premeditated rules is one away from art.

Now, how does a step away from art manifest itself if you can't comprehend it in the music? And if the one isn't a corollary of the other, what has Mr. Laird got against computers?

Yours, etc.,

London, N.W.3

ALAN WALKER



# Round the London Art Galleries

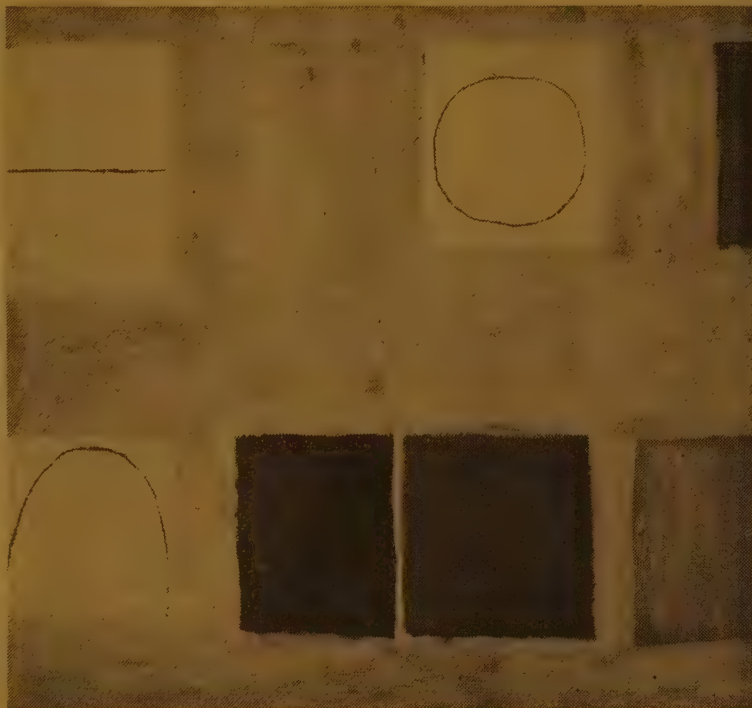
By KEITH SUTTON

NO ONE WHO responded with enthusiasm to the first appearance in England of Jackson Pollock's late, grand, and lyrical style of painting imagined or claimed that the artist had sprung fully armed from a barren aesthetic womb, alone and without precedents. But already by the time we got to know something of him he was being wrapped round with trappings of a myth-king cum anarchist, at once a leader of his peoples and an aggressor against the established tenets of (modern) European art. The circumstances of his early death in 1956 and the peculiar mood of the time had speeded up canonization to a point where, in writing of the Retrospective Exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery (THE LISTENER, November 27, 1958) Mr. Lawrence Alloway, one of Pollock's most eloquent admirers, had to call for restraint by calling for more evidence: 'We need to see every work by Pollock that we can if we are to replace the tragic legend by accurate insights . . .'

Now, with the exhibition at the Marlborough of sixty-two paintings from the estate of Jackson Pollock Mr. Alloway himself has, with his introduction and notes to the fully illustrated catalogue, fulfilled his own reasonable demands. This exhibition is unlikely however to convert many mockers; if anything, what is found to be new is likely to seem more tough and uncompromising even though it may be evidence of human figuration, Surrealism, Cubism, or a touch of El Greco. What is more fascinating about this fuller picture of the artist's character are the signs of Pollock's struggle with 'American Romanticism' which we more familiarly associate in England with American literature and the pursuit of 'The Great American Novel'. Those of us who were seduced by the lyricism of Pollock's drip paintings (from 1947 on) may now discover our admiration enhanced by realizing not only the intensity of what Pollock went through but how modestly he carried his victories. He did not need to wave the banners of his battles through his subsequent work; he was not forever stripping his sleeve to show his wounds but lived with each new achievement on its own terms; completely committed he remained relaxed and calm. It is from such paradoxes of self-command that the most commanding art arises.

Second generations, just missing stirring events, have their own problems in coming to terms with those events. In art it often takes the form of an early and excessive assertion of individual stylistic mannerisms. In the case of the Americans there is so much variety in any case in the older painters that the younger artists, now showing in an exhibition of Modern American Painting at the U.S.I.S. Gallery at the

American Embassy, appear to be uninhibited by the glamour of recent history. In listing pictures by Morris Louis, Ray Parker, Jim Dine, and Theodoros Stamos as a personal choice I will admit to a possible European predilection for lyrical sensibility, but these pictures are to be seen, admirably displayed, in a context of



'Morning in Mykonos' (1960-61), by William Scott: from the exhibition at the Hanover Gallery, 32a George Street, W.1

modern international architecture. The last thing they look is precious or overwhelmed. Louis has already been impressively shown at the I.C.A. and Stamos at Gimpels. As all these pictures are drawn from English holdings it is to be profoundly hoped that Parker will follow with a one-man show soon.

Gallery. One celebrates its transference to attractive and more spacious premises in North Audley Street with an exhibition of paintings by the Mexican Rufino Tamayo. And 'celebrates' is the right word because this is the first individual showing in this country of the sixty-two-year-old artist's work and already the painters and the students with their instinctive nose for the genuine thing have been appraising it. Apart from his pictures in the Mexican exhibition at the Tate we have seen very little of his work in the flesh and these, being recent pictures of a calm magisterial authority, may at first seem to lack the bite of his earlier work with its imagery as sharp as a half-moon. But gradually the paintings take over one's senses with colour as involved as old carpets and surfaces as rich and subtle and dry as cornfields in August.

The word 'grand' has been applied to the paintings of William Scott before his present exhibition at the Hanover as though the pots

and pans, the tables and the boats and the torsos he painted belonged to a hierarchy of not savage domesticity. Such a concept was hardly likely to have been explicit in Scott's mind but in the early 'fifties all partly realist painting was viewed through such literary conceits as 'kitchen sink painting' with its attendant social over-

tones. Scott's simplifications and sense of grandness sprang from purely formal and aesthetic considerations while the softly loaded canvases with their rich sweeping glazes remained primarily life-enhancing easel paintings. The present pictures, the first we have seen as a group since 1956, are much larger, almost mural in size, and he makes use of dry, gritty, and scarred surfaces. They are still painting resilient to the artist's touch, still on canvas but they encourage us to remember one of Scott's favourite notions—that of 'the beauty of the thing badly done'. But anyone who has watched Scott's development knows that he does things in his own time and for his own reasons and it would be a mistake to accuse him of wilful primitivism or to call the picture surfaces 'brutal'. He has something of the romantic idealism of Pasmore and something of the artist's sense of inner illumination emanates from his canvases as if the simplifications which Scott makes of his forms were the result of the washings and bleachings of tides of light.

The small but satisfying retrospective exhibition of Marcoussis at Roland Browse and Delbanco affords several pleasures. The most obvious of these is the sheer good carpentry of his picture making which never lets down his ideas whether slight or ambitious. The more exciting pictures I find to be those of the 'thirties when his colour darkens and there is maximum interplay and tension between his Cubist and Surrealist imageries.

The pressure of current exhibitions only allows me the briefest reference to the excellent exhibition of Old Masters at Colnaghi's where an outstanding item is Mattia Preti's 'Feast of Herod', a picture which would command respect in any national collection. Recent loans and acquisitions at the National Gallery and the Tate and the distinguished display of Chinese painting at the British Museum must be held over until next week.

*The Art of the Stone Age*, written by a group of writers with an introduction by Hans-Georg Bandt is a new volume in the series 'Art of the World' (Methuen, 42s.). The whole of Valéry's book on Degas, and essays on Corot, Manet, and Moris are included in Volume XII of Messrs. Routledge and Kegan Paul's edition of the collected works of Paul Valéry (25s.). The translation is by David Paul, and the introduction by Douglas Cooper.



# The Listener's Book Chronicle

## The Politics of Upheaval

By Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.  
Heinemann £3 3s.

Reviewed by H. G. NICHOLAS

A PERCEPTIVE FRENCHMAN looking at the New Deal in its heyday remarked that Franklin Roosevelt had exploded one of the most popular of American myths; he had dissociated the concept of wealth from the concept of virtue. This, the third volume of Professor Schlesinger's history of the Age of Roosevelt, is devoted to the years 1934 to 1936 when this iconoclastic side of the New Deal is uppermost. It begins just after the mid-term election in which not only the Republican Party but also, almost more conspicuously, the Liberty League, the crusading front of big business, took one of the biggest beatings in American politics. It concludes with the 1936 presidential election, the landslide to end landslides.

If the dominant theme of the previous volume was recovery the dominant theme of this is reaction—a twofold reaction, of business against an administration which refused to return to the *status quo ante*, and of an administration which takes to the verbal offensive even (perhaps especially) when its actual politics are only mildly reformist. The alienation occurs when, seemingly, the real conflict has abated. Why? Because when the shock of the emergency passes the business Bourbons show that they have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing, and because a naturally conservative President, let down by his class, vents his disappointment against them in words that hurt even more than deeds. This is the story which dominates *The Politics of Upheaval*.

It is hardly necessary to tell anyone, except a very late-comer to the 'Age of Roosevelt', how well Professor Schlesinger tells it. All the elements in the deserved success of the previous volumes reappear in this—graphic narrative, lively character sketches, deft marshalling of facts, skilful and keen delineation of the movement of social forces and intellectual currents. We still have to suffer some of the headline rhetoric—'The Theology of Ferment', 'Mumbings in the Night' (it is surprising how often *Time* appears in Professor Schlesinger's source-references); there is still some reluctance to dig very deep into the sticky clay of administrative history or electoral analysis. But these are minor faults; they do not seriously get in the way of the author's main objective, which is to present his history as an interplay of men, ideas and social movements. There may be periods for which such an objective is inadequate, but for these years it does very well. We read, we enjoy, we understand.

Two years—and 650 pages. Can history justify itself on so spacious a scale? The author's skill apart, the material is in fact rich in interest to anyone who cares for the clash of personality (e.g., the Ickes-Hopkins feud) or of institutions (e.g., the Supreme Court versus the New Deal) or of ideas (e.g., the first New Deal's emphasis on planning and the second New Deal's reliance

on reform). These twenty-four months are studded with colourful figures, like Huey Long, Floyd Olson, La Guardia, and the gerontocrat Dr. Townshend. The literature of topical indiscretion was as well developed by the 'thirties as at any time in American history; this enables Professor Schlesinger to supplement his relatively meagre findings from the archives with a splendid mosaic constructed from the diaries, memoirs and press revelations of the period. Even at the rate of a page a day there is no need (as there is no suggestion) of padding; whatever else it was, the America of the mid-thirties rightly appears here as a country of prodigious vitality and great diversity. And Europe, from these pages, is very far away. Fascism is what a handful of American Communists talk about at popular front rallies. London is where travelling ideologues like Laski or Keynes or H. G. Wells come from. How charming it all seems!

## Teachings of Gurdjieff

The Journal of a Pupil. Routledge. 30s.

It tells one something about Gurdjieff that almost nothing written about him is ever dull. This particular book is full of interesting, intriguing, and sometimes illuminating anecdotes. Its chief defect is that nearly half its total length is taken up with a report of Orage's commentaries on Gurdjieff's writings. Not that Orage is not sometimes very stimulating, but it is hard to swallow ninety continuous pages of him without chapters or sub-headings and with no very consistent thread of discourse. One could wish the author had compressed this section and included some more of his own reminiscences, however slight.

He gives an amusing glimpse of the visit of Aleister Crowley, the weird 'black' magician, to Gurdjieff's Institute at Fontainebleau:

The children were there, and he said to one of the boys something about his son whom he was teaching to be a devil. Gurdjieff got up and spoke to the boy, who thereupon took no further notice of Crowley. There was some talk between Crowley and Gurdjieff, who kept a sharp watch on him all the time. I got a strong impression of two magicians, the white and the black—the one strong, powerful, full of light; the other also powerful, but heavy, dull, and ignorant. Though 'black' is too strong a word for Crowley. . . .

But if Gurdjieff was a white magician, he was not a solemn or a sanctimonious one. He was humorous, earthy, and tough as a gangster. Perhaps the least interesting thing about him is his outlandish cosmic mythology. But in this there was certainly an element of leg-pulling, as there was in so many of his activities. The fact that Diaghileff paid several visits to Fontainebleau to study Gurdjieff's music and dances is a sufficient proof that he was not a charlatan in his art; and if his *All and Everything* is not very readable, well, according to Orage every complete statement in it has seven aspects, so the other six may be more rewarding than the one that leaps to the eye. It says nothing at all against Gurdjieff, in fact it says something for

him, that he founded no fashionable, influential school. If he had been no more than a Freud or a Jung he might have done so. But he was a prophet, and one of the profoundest critics of twentieth century civilization. He had no use for modern scientists, poets, or educationists; he pointed out that children are happiest in the company of craftsmen and labourers; and he told a novelist:

You live in dreams and write about your dreams. Much better for you if you were to scrub one floor consciously than to write a hundred books as you do now.

He maintained, indeed, that we all live in dreams, and more particularly the best educated of us. His idea was that we should wake up. He is lucky not to have been stoned.

RICHARD REES

One-Leg: the Life and Letters of Henry William Paget, first Marquess of Anglesey.  
By Lord Anglesey. Cape. £2 5s.

This is a lavish publication with some forty pages of maps and illustrations, the only fault in its presentation being the abominably awkward triple system of footnotes at the back of the book. And these include forty-five pages of 'substantive' notes, for the author too has been lavish with the care he has taken in preparing this non-hagiographical biography of his great-great-grandfather.

Paget began conventionally enough—Oxford, the Tour, a seat in Parliament—but the Revolutionary wars lifted him out of the ruck of the aristocracy. Appointed colonel of the 7th Hussars in 1797, he showed on the retreat to Corunna nine years later that he was more than just a recklessly brave dandy. Yet despite his evident flair for handling cavalry formations he was for some time virtually unemployed, held back in part because of his elopement with Wellington's sister-in-law. (After their respective divorces they lived contentedly married for the rest of their long lives.) But when Napoleon landed from Elba Paget went out to Brussels to command the Allies' cavalry—and to lose a leg but win a glorious reputation.

Wellington would have preferred another commander to this dashing huzzar, and at Waterloo he was nearly proved right. Paget, brilliantly timing a charge of the 'heavies', foolishly but typically led it himself and therefore lost control—and thus nearly half the men. For the rest of the day the British cavalry was dangerously weakened. Yet that charge had dealt a probably critical blow to the French and the Allies did, after all, win the battle. Paget returned home to receive a hero's welcome and the earl by inheritance now became a marquess by merit.

One of Anglesey's most admirable characteristics was that he had a clear sense of his limitations and abilities:

I . . . have a facility in establishing an influence over people and of winning them to me a good deal. I cannot [however] persuade them that I am clever for I am not so . . . I cannot debate in the House, and at Council . . . I have not the power of expressing . . . my view of affairs.



Inevitably, then, he did not subsequently hold the highest offices in the state but, equally inevitably, one feels, the service he did render was competent, disinterested and marked by that firm independence which enabled him to tell William IV just what the nation had the right to expect of him, Charles X just why he had been sent into exile, and the Pope where he was wrong about liberalism. And the last two 'lessons' stemmed from the fact that Anglesey was open-minded and saw which way the world was going. Thus in 1832 he wanted 'reform, temperate but deep and general . . . [and] a government that shall rule by public opinion and the confidence of the people'; thus in Ireland, when lord-lieutenant there in 1828, he came round in favour of Catholic Emancipation. These were hardly views shared by Wellington—hence his recall in the following year and a period of coolness before the two old soldiers resumed their warm friendship—but they were views which made him a natural choice for Ireland again in 1830 under Grey's government. Three years later he retired from office, returning to public life only in 1846 as an octogenarian field-marshal and Master General of the Ordnance.

Based on a considerable documentation, including unlisted family papers, this book, though rather weak on Anglesey in office, merits the attention of all those interested in the period, for they will find both useful and absorbing this readable life of one of the last of 'the old race of nobles'.

MAURICE HUTT

**Poems. By George Seferis. Translated by Rex Warner. Bodley Head. 15s.**

Most of us know George Seferis only in translation. At least six able and distinguished hands have been busy with him since the war, frequently covering the same ground. In what are obviously simpler passages, they all produce more or less the same English phrases and lines; there are even moments where a new translator seems to be courteously avoiding copying a predecessor; and there are also passages where there are rather serious differences, and at these points the translators cannot all be right. But it is always the same voice that comes speaking off the page to us: in all the translations there are the same passion, anguish, irony and humour, the same coherent distinctness of personality.

It is all this that makes Mr. Seferis take possession of us so surely, even when we cannot at once apprehend the transition from one thought to another. The variants in the translations may make us unable to quote him in our own mind as certainly as we quote Yeats or Eliot; instead we seem to remember, all at once, the whole man, with his infinitely rich memories and his accepted experience. And what manner of man? One can only loosely describe the person who speaks in this poetry, and he has been described frequently before: a storm-tossed Odysseus, who even back at home does not forget his exile, and whose exile is never quite over. As in our own thoughts, his past and present co-exist. The persons in the surrounding drama are few and recurrent, but enough: the fellow-argonauts, more especially the gross, carnal Elpenor, amiable but not undangerous; Aphrodite, a good object; Circe, a bad but serviceable one. This Odysseus has a future, of course, as well as a past; and at the end of it

will come a single death. He has already acquired a capacity for silent colloquy with the land of the dead; but he does not suffer from the illusion that the dead are not extinct. Thus, crudely, one sums up the character with whom, in the act of reading, one becomes united.

Mr. Warner's selection from Seferis's work over thirty years, though one must hope for more, is already a large and generous one. I would have preferred a longer introduction and many more notes, and perhaps even some guidance as to what to read first. I would suggest that the reader begin with the rightly famous 'King of Asine': one of those strange, great, immediately accessible poems that yet retain, for ever, certain mysteries:

And the King of Asine, our quest for two years now,  
Unknown, forgotten by everyone, even by  
Homer—

Just one word in the Iliad and that word doubtful  
Thrown down here like the gold sepulchral mask.  
You tapped it. Do you remember how it rang?  
Hollow in the light, like a dry jar in dug earth.  
And our oars in the sea made the same sound.  
The King of Asine an emptiness beneath the  
mask,

Everywhere with us, everywhere with us, beneath  
a name.

Then, perhaps, the reader should absorb the lyrics of the early *Mythistorema*; then he should tackle (perhaps with the help of Mr. Philip Sherrard's commentary in *The Marble Threshing-Floor*) the difficult late poem 'Thrush'. One says difficult: but its surface is greatly alluring, and nowhere in Seferis is the sense of a physical intermingling of the mythical and the contemporary so powerfully achieved, and with so little of conventional shock. Mr. Sherrard, who has also translated this poem, has some reservations about the quality of its first two sections; but in both his and Mr. Warner's versions the first poem in particular seems to me very eloquent and haunting. And throughout the book there is the impression of a major poet, who sees his own life steadily and sees it whole.

HENRY REED

**Tennyson: the Growth of a Poet  
By Jerome Hamilton Buckley.**

Oxford, for Harvard University Press. 30s

I suppose unwillingly we do really believe in the Zeitgeist. It does not seem profitable to bring out in 1961 a book that might almost as well have appeared in 1892. This is a patient survey of the whole of Tennyson's work, thorough, scholarly, well documented and as dead as mutton. It will neither refine nor confirm the appreciation of those who like Tennyson already; and it will do nothing to change the opinion of those who don't. Mr. Buckley has had the use of the Tennyson papers at Harvard. They provide him with some variant readings, first drafts and the like. Sir Charles Tennyson's *Life* of 1949 has given a slightly different slant on Tennyson's biography. But in spite of these additional garlands the solid lump of public statuary remains unchanged. 'On the second Sunday after Tennyson's death, the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, preached a memorial sermon in the college chapel, declaring Tennyson the greatest Trinity man since Newton'. No doubt he did, but what has this to do with Apollo, with Dionysus or with me? Dog does not eat dog, and it ill behoves an

academic to complain of academic criticism but there is really no excuse for a book of this sort, entirely unrelated to any present movement of opinion or taste, on a familiar and accessible poet.

So far as Mr. Buckley has a thesis it is that the division between Tennyson the unhappy lyricist and Tennyson the public bard is a mistake. Unluckily the thesis is critically false. This division, or something like it, is the only way to rescue Tennyson from insensibility and neglect. He has written a number of poems, mostly early, that no one who cares for the voice of English poetry can remain indifferent to. But the attempt to confound the mass of his work in an indiscriminate rescue operation can only sink good with bad. The bad are not bad because they are Victorian or dated but because their elevation of language is nerveless, their mellifluousness flaccid, and their thought poverty-stricken. It is not that Mr. Buckley is unaware of these gradations. He does distinguish between one poem and another; but so faintly, and with such an air of tepid ceremonial complacency over all, that the effect on anyone who loves Tennyson at his best is lowering in the extreme. Sir Harold Nicolson's book on Tennyson, written nearly forty years ago, suffers today under the imputation of graceful frivolity. Its tone is of the 'twenties, more patronising than we feel possible now. But if we want to know what is to be admired in Tennyson and what is beyond redemption, it still seems to be the only guide.

GRAHAM HOUGH

**They Saw it Happen. Compiled by Asa Briggs  
Basil Blackwell. 30s.**

Professor Briggs's compilation, the fourth of a series which begins with a volume embracing the years 55 B.C. to 1485, can be used in three ways: as an agreeable bedside book, as a quarry for descriptions and quotations with which to spice an essay or a lecture, and as a commentary on the history of the years 1897-1940. Whichever way he uses it, the reader will be helped by the editor's short but perceptive notes which introduce each extract and help to put the whole work together; there are also useful suggestions for 'further reading'.

The selection of passages, ranging from a paragraph to some half-dozen pages, is excellent and includes much out-of-the-way material. In politics we have (to name only a few) the final debate in the House of Lords over the Parliament Act, Lord Samuel's and Lord Curzon's accounts of the political crisis of December 1916, Lord Templewood on the Carlton Club meeting in 1922 and again on the change of government in August 1931. The Hoare-Laval Pact is described by Lord Vansittart—it is good to have something from that attractive writer. For the first world war we have descriptions of Gallipoli, Zeebrugge, Passchendaele, and George VI's account (as Prince Albert) of the battle of Jutland.

Social history is well represented. C. F. C. Masterman and Sir Harold Nicolson are admirable on the false glitter of Edwardian society, Macqueen-Pope and Shaw Desmon nostalgic on music halls and hotels and the joy of bicycling on empty, dusty country roads; and there is an unexpected and lively account of signalman's work on the District Railway in its steam days. For the inter-war years we are given



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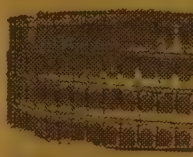
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# THE OBSERVER



passages on the hunger marchers, the B.B.C., popular songs, Orwell on Wigan, an *Evening Standard* report on Merthyr Tydfil in 1936, an account of Australian reactions to body-line bowling, and—the most surprising and delightful extract of all—A. W. Myers on Suzanne Lenglen at Wimbledon and her impact on women's dress. A passage from Henry Hall's reminiscences suggests the extraordinary range of Professor Briggs's reading, and deserves its place beside, say, extracts from George V's diary or George VI on the Abdication.

Any selection is bound to be personal, but one

might have liked passages from Violet Markham's memoirs, or David Garnett's, on the leisured and useful lives of middle-class Edwardians. The extracts on Ireland are brief and uninspiring; and there are first-hand accounts of the General Strike in Raymond Postgate's *Worker's History of the Great Strike* which give a more vivid impression than those used here. The brittle life of the thirties—intense political activity on the Left under the shadow of war—nowhere comes through.

A more serious weakness is implicit in the title. Most of these accounts are not those of

eye-witnesses writing at the time; they are remembered in tranquillity and committed to memoirs. Many of the things described are not 'events'; they are social conditions or political manoeuvres. And many real events cannot be recounted in a short passage, for example a debate in Parliament; though the flavour of these is given in L. S. Amery's account of the debate which led to Neville Chamberlain's resignation, and Harry Boardman's description of Churchill's first meeting with the House of Commons as Prime Minister—an eye-witness account indeed.

C. L. MOWAT

## New Novels

*Billiards at Half Past Nine.* By Heinrich Böll. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 18s.

*The Wedding Band.* By Samuel Yellen. Gollancz. 15s.

*The Father's Comedy.* By Roy Fuller. André Deutsch. 13s. 6d.

*For the Good of the Company.* By Thomas Hinde. Hutchinson. 16s.

THERE HAVE BEEN FEW good poems about families. Social essays galore and sermons everlasting but, apart from Coventry Patmore, I can think of no major English poet who concentrated on domestic bliss or agony. In many ways this is a pity since many of the deeper truths about people only become apparent when they are seen as part of the ceaseless rubbing of person against person and foible against foible, the mournful repetition of pettinesses and the long slow drift into chronic affection which are all inseparable from the family situation. True, there are signs that some poets are beginning to react against the taboo on domestic subjects, and only the other day I read an excellent little poem by Mr. Thom Gunn in which he protested to his 'small pink member':

love involves things neither Tris-  
tan nor you could ever do:  
such as washing the dishes,

But such gestures are faint as against the main stream of metaphysical and romantic verse. And so, by default, one of the greatest conceivable themes of verse has been taken out of the hands of poets and handed to the novelists. They have made good use of it. George Eliot and Thomas Mann, D. H. Lawrence and Fyodor Dostoevsky, the list of novelists who have successfully tackled the problems of writing about the complications of family life is endless, and the richness they have rescued for every one of us is inexhaustible.

How, then, are the successors of these great names making use of their material? Judging from the four books in front of me they are well alive to the opportunities afforded by a subject-matter as old as human life and as varied. An incredible assortment of families display the acrobatics of love and hate among the jostling intimacies of the room next door.

Heinrich Böll's family first. It is prosperous and, on one side, patrician, very German and utterly decent. It is ruled over with a smile of flexible irony by the grandfather, an architect who seems to have specialized in the designing of ecclesiastical buildings. His first great commission was for St. Anthony's Abbey which he built in 1908. This was destroyed by his son Robert in 1945. I have often wondered how a sane man could survive in the mad environment of Nazi Germany. In the character of Robert Faehmel and his assistant, Schrit, Herr Böll has provided me with part of the answer: by becoming a

demolition expert. 'He (Schrit) had made a vow to destroy *only* German bridges and *only* German buildings, and not destroy so much as a pane of glass in any Russian cottage'. And, of course, in the madness of those years this lunacy of self-destruction was accepted as patriotic.

Indeed, it is as an *exposé* of nazism and war disrupting the family, changing some members into mere shells, driving some mad, killing others, that *Billiards at Half Past Nine* is chiefly valuable. And all this is done without mentioning Hitler. This feat is achieved by using instead a rite called the *Buffalo Sacrament*, those who partake of it being nazis, those who refuse it anti-nazis. Of the Faehmel family only one, Robert's younger brother, Otto, eats of the Sacrament. His defection and subsequent death in Russia, along with the death of her daughter-in-law, Robert's wife, drive the old Frau Faehmel round the bend and she is consigned to a sanatorium. All this, and much more, is told in flashback from the day of the old man's eightieth birthday, which coincides with the return of Robert's brother-in-law, Schrella, from exile in Holland and England. But I baulk at giving more than a hint of the splendid complexity of Herr Böll's cast. Suffice it to say that almost every type of humanity is represented, from the mousy, worried secretary to the psychopathic killer, saints and sinners, the worldly wise and the innocent. In spite of some unnecessary repetitions, I must applaud this book as a real contribution to our understanding of our fellow men.

Very few families could be more unlike the prosperous and upright Faehmels than the seedy and dispirited Davidovs. Yet Samuel Yellen manages to infuse so much compassion and tenderness into this analysis of a mixed marriage and its offspring that his achievement is little, if at all, less than Herr Böll's. Basically the story of *The Wedding Band* is simple. A young American girl marries a Jewish immigrant, takes her duties so seriously that she not only learns to cook in the Jewish fashion but also masters Yiddish but, after having borne him three children, she has an affair with a Scottish confidence trickster who persuades her to sell her house and pockets the proceeds. But such a *résumé* gives no idea of the subtlety with which Mr. Yellen unfolds his tale. Whereas I have some doubts about the necessity for Herr Böll's method of flashback, I have none at all about Mr. Yellen's.

It is absolutely right that the story should be told by the middle-aged professorial spinster who is Meyer Davidov's daughter, right because only her deep affection for him, as well as for her mother, can give the proper perspective, blurring the edges of pain here, sharpening the sense of the ridiculous there and, above all, confronting all the errors of those past days with their effects, tragic or comic, in the present.

Both Roy Fuller and Thomas Hinde eschew such subtleties or, rather, use them sparingly in a context of straight narrative. Mr. Fuller's *The Father's Comedy* seems to me his best novel to date. He chooses for his hero Harold Colmore, an organization man who is much troubled by his better feelings, particularly his love for his son Giles. Giles is doing his National Service in a part of the world that sounds suspiciously like Kenya during the Mau-Mau troubles. There he gets into very hot water indeed by hitting an officer who was beating up a prisoner. The officer subsequently dies and the bulk of the book is taken up with Harold's efforts to defend his son. In order to do so effectually, he exposes his own past as a former member of the Communist Party, thus seriously jeopardizing his chances of promotion at the Authority. The chief interest of the book centres on the relationship between father and son: this is depicted with great delicacy, the difficulties of communication between the generations forming a theme that could hardly be bettered as a test of an author's sensitivity.

Like Mr. Fuller's Authority, Thomas Hinde's Trunk Organization is very big business indeed. He seems to have had some idea of balancing it as all one enormous happy family against the desperately unhappy families of real life. At any rate, he has two protagonists, very unequally matched, the one the managing director of the company, the other a very junior employee in the Public Relations department. These two are brought into some sort of relation by a speech which the junior employee is supposed to be writing for the managing director. But, what with all the distractions of cuddle and squeeze in the office and funerals outside it, there is very little discernible pattern. Mr. Hinde knows his subject and writes with a nice acidity, but *For the Good of the Company* seems to me to be a collection of neat vignettes rather than an achieved novel.

BURNS SINGER



# CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

Television Broadcasting

## DOCUMENTARY

### Production Technique

THERE is usually more than one way of doing a thing, including scripting and producing a television programme, and who is to say that one way is undoubtedly better than another? It is easy to sit and watch a programme and, at the end, to opine that a wrong choice was made. The fact that someone has made a choice not only provides an essential starting-point for argument, it also reduces the number of possibilities by one.

'Nothing Sacred' (May 23) in the 'Cinema Today' series, was obviously one way of treating off-beat humour in films. I still clearly remember the same team's extracts from war films from different countries, and hoped for something as good. Some of the sequences we were shown were amusing, though their satire did not startle us as much as Derek Prouse implied.

What was lacking was a witty, pithy commentary to relate the extracts to the theme. Mr. Prouse was too solemn, too would-be learned to convince us or hold our attention. Here was a clear-cut case for using Robert Robinson's technique in 'Picture Parade', and in saying so I intend no disrespect to Mr. Prouse. The talents that enable him to deal so soundly with most aspects of the cinema do not include the light, satiric touch.

For 'The Travelling Smiths' (May 23) and 'Flying Squad' (May 26) the choice was made of allowing the participants to speak dialogue written for them. Being a fairground family and doctors and nurses respectively they were not good at it, and cannot be blamed for that. Their casual chatter was self-conscious and stilted and detracted from the verisimilitude of the scenes.

In 'The Travelling Smiths' there was a

notable exception. Fred Smith, head of the family whose wintering in Coventry was the subject of Mr. Allan Prior's film, was a 'natural'. His hybrid accent, Midlands cross-fertilized with Cockney, was a joy to hear, and he alone gave no cause for anxiety that he would embarrass us by his amateurishness.

The doctors and nurses in 'Flying Squad' were unlucky in having some pretty second-rate lines to speak. With few exceptions they made them sound third-rate. None of the dialogue was essential to our understanding the work of these mobile maternity-case teams. It occurred to me at the time that Mr. Ian Curtis, who wrote and directed the programme, would have done better to adopt one of the alternative methods of



Fred Smith, in his winter quarters in Coventry, rigging up his coconut stand: seen in 'The Travelling Smiths', a portrait of a fairground family



An emergency maternity unit of Southmead Hospital, Bristol, operating in a patient's home—a scene from 'Flying Squad'

conveying the idea of people talking—a narrator outside the action, for example, or no dialogue at all, as was so effectively demonstrated in a film about a Scottish crofter and his family several weeks ago.

Parenthetically, when are producers going to drop the cliché of children playing in the streets to denote the ordinary world going about its business? It was first used in the cinema years ago and occasionally crops up today, especially in scenes showing crooks escaping from justice. Mr. Curtis introduced it the other evening as a contrast with the little drama in the suburban house—half a dozen assorted kids tricycled, shouting to order, past the medical unit's van at the kerbside. It was all most unnatural.

Was it wise for the producer and director

of the film about Pastor Wolfgang Friedrichs ('Meeting Point', May 21) to allow the German Lutheran minister, once a member of the Hitler Youth and a bomber pilot in the war, to speak the lines of his story? His was an unsympathetic voice, and often his accent made ready understanding difficult. I was not sure that the gain in 'genuineness' was sufficient to outweigh the lack of clarity. Nor was I impressed by the story the pastor had to tell. His conversion from nazi airman to practising Christian once the war was lost was a microcosm of the change of heart of the German nation, and just as suspect as to motives.

Someone decided to give Raymond Baxter a minor role in 'Patterns of Heredity' (May 24), and paid a big price for doing so. Normally in these 'Eye on Research' programmes Mr. Baxter is interlocutor, commentator, and summarizer, clarifying the experts' ambiguities, repeating salient points that may have been lost sight of in the flow of subsequent verbiage, and generally ensuring that we, the laymen, are not dazzled by science. In last week's programme his valuable services were (apart from the introduction) dispensed with, and sadly we missed them. The programme was well worth seeing, particularly for the fine film shot of a bean cell dividing and the chromosomes regrouping, but surely there is only one view of Mr. Baxter's worth as a guide.

Equally certainly there can be only one view of the merits of 'Does the Team Think?' (May 28), Sunday night's replacement of 'What's My Line?'. At least, I hope there can be.

PETER POUND

## DRAMA

### Aggressive Academics

ACADEMICS, sedentary though their profession may be, often prove to have a sharply aggressive spirit where matters of principle are involved. Then, compromise intellectually being the lowest form of defection, no quarter can be given. The attraction of this kind of fighting can be as



'The Cannon Song' from *The Threepenny Opera*: a still from the film of Bertolt Brecht's Berliner Ensemble seen in 'Monitor' on May 21



appalling as war itself in its consequences for people.

This hidden fighting force spent a busy five days last week when *Royal Foundation*, by Simon Raven (May 22) actually placed the armed forces against Tertullian College, and R. D. S. Corner in his *The Dobson Fund* (May 25) used the natural enemies of science and academic faculties to sport a fine storm in teacup.

Of the two Mr. Raven's play was the superior. Indeed, it was a very fine piece of television and drama by any standards. For a start the author or authors because, although Mr. Raven wrote the play, Anthony Steven wrote the script) was prepared to attempt an appraisal of what makes a gentleman. This is tricky stuff for the prole-idden television audience. At the slightest sound of social class raising its by-no-means defunct head, the rabble goes to ground like rabbits shocked at the mention of sex.

All the same, Mr. Raven pressed his attack relentlessly home, after an initial feint in which it appeared that it was the military and not the stiffly correct types who were to get the tousing. Cornet Runciman, charged with preferring his academic status to his position of officer and gentleman, turned out in the dramatist's realistic hands no ideal choice on which society could rest the idea of individual freedom.

Soon, however, the subtlety of the author's scheme became effective. The gradual disclosures, admittedly hot-house forced by the processes of a trial scene and therefore not without their exaggerations, skilfully and plausibly altered our initial impression. The rigidity of the military machine became coloured by compassion at the same time as it was indicated that professed liberalism was far from being free of petty spites and injustices.

In the actual presentation of the argument the play was not entirely above criticism. The first half was by far the better. Later the gaps spoilt the pattern somewhat. In particular the scene where Runciman—for all his supposed intellectual brilliance—became tongue-tied and naïve in the witness-box was as unfair to one side as the other, since by absurdly weakening the 'brains' side it left the entrenched military with but futile opposition.

Nevertheless, one aspect of the play was beautifully arranged. To offset the civilian's instinctive distrust of military motives, Mr. Raven

chose for his anti-military demonstration an insufferably egocentric young man, brutally aware of his own brilliance. Richard Carpenter's coldly sneering intellectual, with his acid-drenched humour at others' expense, was horribly alive, far more so than the more conventionally drawn figure of the Commanding Officer. Joseph O'Connor had no easy task in encompassing the required *volte-face*. To his credit he managed it with a flourish. The academics at court were well played by Keith Pyott and Charles Carson.

The querulous Redbrick university lecturers in *The Dobson Fund* ignored any such pre-



A scene from *Royal Foundation*, with (standing) Richard Carpenter as David Runciman; (seated next to him) Richard Clarke as Lieutenant Lezard; (centre, sitting at table) Anthony Sharp as Mr. St. John, Judge Advocate; and (on his left) David Langton as Brigadier Whitmore



Tony Hancock in the first programme of his new series on May 26



*The Dobson Fund*: left to right, standing: David Aylmer as Paul Farrow, Carl Bernard as the Vice-Chancellor, Noel Coleman as Professor Tallon, and Meredith Edwards as Professor Holford; (seated, left to right) Gillian Lind as Mrs. Vice-Chancellor, Ellen Pollock as Professor Megginn, John Stratton as Tom Billings, and Penelope Horner as Cecilia Tallon

tence of acting like gentlemen, however velvet-gloved the in-fighting at the mah-jong party. For myself, I was not impressed by the supposedly 'adult' behaviour here. I have heard veiled discourtesies exchanged with more finesse at teen-age parties.

As a partial picture, it probably held some truth of the in-breeding and in-fighting inherent in closed communities. The troubles arising from the question on whom to bestow the Dobson Fund—science faculty, music, or the Sitwellian poetess for a production of her verse play—became unreal when it seemed that the Vice-Chancellor was acting purely from malicious motives. Interesting

and entertaining though not factually probable, the play also gained point through some nicely theatrical performances in a drily polished idiom. Most notable were Carl Bernard's Vice-Chancellor and Noel Coleman's music professor.

Tony Hancock may only aspire to being a gentleman. His aspirations, like his aspirates, have a way of sneaking out on him. Hardly surprisingly then, he has taken up the intellectual life as a means of satisfying his soul. His new series, 'Hancock', on Fridays, got off to a superb start. No twenty-five minutes have more mercilessly or accurately pilloried the inner man in all of us, the fellow, no matter how alone we are, who keeps our pretensions up, eggs us on to tasks that we know are beyond us, who is always telling us just how gifted we really are.

This minutely graphed portrayal of the person that each of us believes is unknown to his fellow creatures was shocking in its candour. Whether we imagine ourselves in our mirror as Maurice Chevalier singing inimitably (except for our perfect rendering), brushing on a Macmillan moustache in shaving cream, deciding with panic-stricken hypochondria that one of our teeth is loose and then wondering if it may not after all simply be our fingers moving on the molar, dithering in fear before dabbing on the after-shave lotion, we are each one of us observed relentlessly by Mr. Hancock. A fuller categorizing of human foibles has not been seen on television, nor a more compassionate one, for Mr. Hancock may find us funny but never futile.

He has set himself a formidable task with the high quality of this first show, but he is, after all, the only television comedian who can overcome so great an obstacle to future success.

ANTHONY COOKMAN, JR.

#### Sound Broadcasting

#### DRAMA

#### Political Warlocks

DECEPTIVE illusion is not easily created in broadcast drama. We do not sit in darkness with the eyes held by light, and this is an important part of the hypnotic effect of theatre and indeed of television. The listener is easily subject to distraction in his own home and uninfected by the emotional contagion created by being in audience.

It could be argued, indeed, that the 'alienation' or 'estrangement' effect earnestly sought in productions of Brecht is ready made in the radio play situation. The performers must work



hard to cast a glamour over us and their spell is easily broken. We are not preconditioned to acts of empathy, to the day-dreaming self-identification with noble heroes and suffering heroines which puritanical critics and propagandist dramatists deplore in the common theatre-goer.

It should follow then that the listening public, critically conscious and using the mind's eye only, should be the ideal audience for plays which have something new to say—an experience to explore, a thesis to propound, or an altered view of history to recommend. I believe this to be true but am puzzled by the subsequent comparative silence of that critical audience. Producers and playwrights tell me that though listeners met casually are eloquent in appreciation and complaint about their work, few except axe-grinders write to them about it. Which is depressing for a body of good, creative people.

I had difficulty in getting 'into' *Raise The Wind* by Sheila Cregeen (Third, May 26). The Scots speech was no obstacle for me, though some of the archaisms were baffling. They were, however, fully justified, and enriched dialogue clearly pinned to character and of a force and pace which augurs well for the future of this dramatist. Yet an extra effort of attention was needed at the beginning because of them. That effort made, we were plunged into James VI's Scotland and encouraged without being flatly instructed to interpret the undercurrents of witchcraft beneath the talk of common folk in an apparently pious community.

The scene-setting was occasionally too rapid. I had, as required, expected to follow the school-master from kirk to coven but when we got there the cheerful screeching of the company gave me an uncomfortably 'alienated' mental picture of a studio crowded with embarrassed players trying to put across hysteria and threat without overdoing it. The problem of the whole play is one of belief in witchcraft and Miss Cregeen had rejected the two most familiar conventional attitudes towards it.

She was neither saying that the witches were poor deluded fools cruelly persecuted by conventional society nor that they were a secret and vicious body with genuine supernatural powers. Her witches when discovered, imprisoned, tortured and interrogated, made claims to special powers and obliged the silly-clever King by 'confessing' that their malice was directed by Bothwell, the man he feared more than Satanic powers. But the hero, John Cunningham (Tom Watson), captured a second time and sure of death, firmly maintained that the hocus-pocus was merely a desperate masquerade.

I found the political motive confusing, not being sure whether we were being asked to accept that Bothwell used the covens as a resistance movement and not knowing if there was historical evidence for that suggestion. Some dramatic ambiguity was clearly right and it was fair that we should join Mother Sampson (Eithne Dunne) in her half-belief that she could raise the winds and threaten the King. But the shifting of sympathy involved in presenting partial delusion made for too much uncertainty and intellectual subtlety for dramatic effectiveness—especially when the themes of torture and death by burning were constantly in the mind.

The character of James, the 'wisest fool in Christendom' was made fully plausible by Peter Cloughton and his behaviour as an interrogator, half sceptical and half credulous, was brilliantly managed to show how the fears of a questioner can project themselves into the minds of those put to the question. Another complex character well portrayed was the Minister, Alexander Craigie (Finlay Currie). In his pride in his cloth, horror of blasphemy and distress at being deceived by the people in his care, he was a

sympathetic and credible figure. This play was impressive to an historical ignoramus. It deserves a wider audience than the Third can provide and the criticism of qualified historians or warlocks.

FREDERICK LAWS

## THE SPOKEN WORD



### The Art of Advocacy

ADVOCACY IS AN ART, and, as Lord Birkett reminded us (Home Service, May 28) it is not confined to the law-courts; the art of the spoken word is supremely at home on the air. I have listened to most of Lord Birkett's portraits of 'Great Advocates', and his postscript to the series, 'The Art of Advocacy', had all the persuasive eloquence I expected. I think that speaker and producer may share the credit equally for a talk that was stylish but never sounded read: a talk that had the rolling eloquence of forensic speech but somehow contrived to be personal. I hope that Lord Birkett may be persuaded to give us a further series of *causeries du dimanche*: to appreciate Brougham and other legal luminaries of the past, and (if etiquette allows) to touch on some of the controversial legal issues of today.

Talking of talks, a most endearing Home Service talk was sandwiched between a concerto and a symphony on May 19. Frederick Willis, an ex-Mayfair tradesman, chatted about 'Eccentric Advertising' with a humour and vitality as Cockney as jellied eels and, apparently, a complete disregard of the microphone. This saying-what-comes-naturally is among the essentials of a broadcast, it is one of the surest ways of holding the listener, and I eagerly look forward to the day when we hear a bus conductor let loose for half an hour in 'I Remember'.

The other two talks I heard last week were rather less satisfying. In the first of two on 'Republicanism in South Africa' (Third Programme, May 19), Mr. S. A. Cilliers, a South African lawyer, discussed the gradual loosening of ties with Great Britain, and followed the long South African trek towards nationhood with the ardour of a young nationalist. He did not entirely convince us that, under the new order, relations with South Africa would be stronger than ever; but his case, if unconvincing, was thoughtfully presented. As for the last talk, it was a pity that Mr. Gerald Sparrow, who spoke so entertainingly on Siam, should give us such a thin, inflated footnote as 'Through Gordon's Telescope' (Home Service, May 23). On a recent visit to the Sudan, Mr. Sparrow found Gordon's telescope, and he met a descendant of the Mahdi. There was little to say about Gordon's telescope, except that it bore the name of a shop in Bond Street; and as for the Mahdi's descendant, he was not all that forthcoming.

Two talks on Africa, and a feature on Africa, too. The prospect was enough to inspire alarm and despondency. We have heard so much about Africa in the last few months that a programme must be outstanding to hold our attention. 'Kenya at the Crossroads' (Home Service, May 23) was certainly a fine documentary. It showed us natives 'pitchforked from the Stone Age into the twentieth century'; it presented the European settlers, bewildered and understandably angry at their treatment by African leaders and the British Government. It brought us Jomo Kenyatta and the Governor-General of Kenya; it showed understanding of black and white, but it pulled no punches. It gave us some pretty sobering details, but it contrived to end in a mood of optimism. In short, it was a muscular programme; adult, well informed, well edited.

One might say the same about Patric Dickinson's latest radio portrait. 'Highly imaginative and a little terrific': so an acquaintance des-

cribed Edgar Allan Poe, and 'The Orphan' (Third Programme, May 23) amply bore out the comment. One can hardly imagine a literary figure who differs more from Tennyson, Mr. Dickinson's last sitter, than the author of 'The Raven': the pathetic sado-necrophile whose life ran the whole gamut of tragedy from orphanhood at the age of two to premature death in *delirio trementi*. Poe's life was quite as wretched as the workings of his own mind were quite as tortured, as anything in his writing; and to find a comparable literary figure one would have to go to Gérard de Nerval or Baudelaire. I do not agree that *The Poetic Principle*, first printed in 1850, was 'the very first avowal of a new original principle, Art for Art's Sake'. I think it much more likely that Baudelaire found the theory in the work of Gautier, who had expressed it in 1834, in the preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, and constantly expressed it in his journalism. However, none can deny the extraordinary affinity between Poe and Baudelaire or the strength of Poe's influence on French and, indeed, English literature. 'One cannot be sure', said Mr. Eliot, 'that one's own writing has not been influenced by Poe'; and Poe would certainly have signed the lines from *The Cocktail Party* that Mr. Dickinson quoted. 'The Orphan' was a psychological study that got well into the mind of the sitter, a radio profile that showed both ease and style. It was also, like Poe himself, 'a little terrific'.

JOANNA RICHARDSON

## MUSIC



### Berlioz and Puccini

'NO ONE, I suppose, will misunderstand the genre to which this work belongs...' So wrote Hector Berlioz in his preface to *Romeo and Juliet* to which himself had given the explanatory sub-title of 'symphonie dramatique', thereby disconcerting both the critics and the public who did not quite know what to expect when they attended the première of this controversial work in November 1839. As it happened there was present in the audience on this occasion a young man who was later to make a name for himself called Richard Wagner; and although at the time, as he admitted, the work was for him 'revelation', it led him later on to formulate certain criticisms with regard to its form which prompted Berlioz to write the preface which begins with the sentence quoted above.

Nevertheless, it is probable that one of the reasons why *Romeo and Juliet* is so seldom performed in its entirety is precisely the rather hybrid form in which it is cast, so that the opportunity afforded last week to hear the complete work (Third Programme, May 22) was doubly welcome. And the performance itself could hardly have been bettered, with Pierre Monteux conducting the London Symphony Orchestra and the B.B.C. Chorus and Choral Society, with Freda Gray-Massé, Camille Maurane, and André Vessières as soloists.

The work surely contains some of the most beautiful music Berlioz ever wrote, notably the wonderful *Nocturne: Adagio amoroso* which characteristically, he entrusts to the orchestra alone instead of making it a love duet, as if to emphasize that the work is primarily a symphony, and not an opera. Of the soloists thought the two men were the best but the choral sections are the weakest in this curious unequal work which nevertheless contains so much fine music. M. Monteux gave us a perfect *Queen Mab Scherzo*, and the orchestra played the *Bacchanale* in the ball-room scene brilliantly.

One of the best broadcasts of the week was the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra's concert (Home Service, May 24) in which Sybil Michelow sang six songs from Hindemith's *Da*



*Marienleben* with much feeling and understanding. Her voice, a rather high contralto, has a beautiful quality which enabled her to do justice to these fine songs (settings of poems by Rilke) which were originally written in 1924 with piano accompaniment and orchestrated much later. The music reveals Hindemith in an unfamiliar mood of lyrical, almost tender introspection which was admirably reflected in the singer's interpretation. This was the first time the six orchestrated songs had been broadcast in this country. The programme also included the first performance here of a curious work for five trumpets, percussion, and strings by the Polish woman composer Grazyna Bacewicz, who has studied in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. It seemed to be very ably written, highly dynamic, and full of tension and excitement, and the percussion was treated in such a way that it seemed an integral part of the composition and not a mere accessory. Altogether,

a purposeful-sounding work, with a definite character of its own.

To complete an unusually interesting programme there was Janáček's magnificent *Sinfonietta*, a wonderfully vivid and exciting work which gave the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra's brass and woodwind players especially every opportunity, which they took with both hands, to show their virtuosity. Rudolf Schwarz conducted throughout.

The B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Rudolf Schwarz, was broadcasting again three days later (Third Programme, May 27), this time from the St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich where the thirty-ninth Norwich Triennial Musical Festival is now taking place. In addition to symphonies by Beethoven (No. 8) and Bruckner (No. 4) the programme included the first performance of Lennox Berkeley's *Suite: A Winter's Tale* which has grown out of the incidental music he wrote (for wind instruments

only) for the Stratford production a year ago. This proved to be an altogether delightful work, falling most agreeably on the ear and marked by plenty of invention and spontaneity.

I have left to the last the broadcast from Covent Garden (Home Service, May 26) of the last performance of the current season's production of *Tosca*, with that great singer Régine Crespin in the title role, and a newcomer to Covent Garden, the Italian tenor Giuseppe di Stefano, as Cavaradossi, and Otakar Kraus as Scarpia. The performance, under Edward Downes, was straightforward and efficient, but could not conceal the essential weaknesses and meretriciousness of Puccini's score. Madame Crespin was in good voice and her *Vissi d'arte* was beautifully sung; Otakar Kraus was a suitably sinister Scarpia, and di Stefano pulled out all the stops and indulged in a good many exaggerated *ritardandi*, notably in *Lucevan le stelle*.

ROLLO H. MYERS

## Gabriel Fauré and Marcel Proust

By EDWARD LOCKSPEISER

Fauré's 'Requiem' will be broadcast at 8.0 p.m. on Friday, June 9 (Home)



'I NOT only love, admire, and adore your music', Proust wrote to Fauré, 'I was and I am still in love with it'. A lifetime's devotion is confessed in this declaration. As early as 1894, when Fauré was hardly known, the twenty-three-year-old Proust, who had himself written nothing more than a few society notes and book reviews, must have been one of the first to see the true values of Fauré's sensibility. Fauré's finest Verlaine songs had recently appeared and Proust writes to Pierre Lavallée: 'Do you know that the young musicians are almost unanimous in not liking *La Bonne chanson* of Fauré? It appears that it is needlessly complicated and so on, very inferior to his other songs. . . . It makes no difference to me for I adore this cycle and what, on the other hand, I do not like are his first songs which they say they prefer'. Later, at the time of *A la recherche du temps perdu*, Proust was haunted by Fauré's first piano and violin Sonata, 'inquiet, tourmenté, schumannesque', as it is described in *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, by the *Ballade* and other piano works and, among the songs, by Fauré's setting of Villiers de l'Isle Adam's *Les Présents*. At this time, too, Fauré's music was cherished by the cream of the Faubourg St. Germain at Proust's magnificent parties. But Fauré himself was not often there. Afflicted by a particularly cruel form of deafness, he caused Proust much anxiety. 'I fear that Fauré's indisposition is a much more serious matter than they say', Proust writes. 'I hardly dare say what is in my mind'. He arranged for the receipt of regular bulletins on Fauré's state of health.

The long personal and musical relationship between Proust and Fauré has not merely an anecdotal interest. It has a direct bearing on *A la recherche du temps perdu*, Proust's profound inquiry into the workings of the unconscious mind brought to the surface by the myriad associations of music. Proust believed that only music could illuminate this hinterland of the conscious mind. In a sense *A la recherche* is itself a musical work, employing musical devices of construction, notably in the constantly changing significance throughout the twelve volumes of the 'petite phrase' and the Vinteuil Sonata, the device of the Wagnerian *Leitmotiv*. André Coeuroy was certainly right in maintaining that nowhere in the whole work of Wagner

was the *Leitmotiv* used with more effect and skill than in *A la recherche*, where Vinteuil's 'little phrase', always the same obsessional figure and yet not the same, is made to reflect a lifetime's deepening experience of love and, more than this, to reveal the maze of cross-identifications buried in the unconscious mind by which the loved object is nourished.

Proustians have long tried to discover the work or works that generated the idea of the 'little phrase'. Proust himself gave two versions, so far as I am aware, to Jacques de Lacretelle and to Prince Antoine Bibesco. Besides works by Schubert, Saint-Saëns, Franck, and Wagner (*Lohengrin* and the Good Friday music from *Parsifal*), both include works by Fauré, the *Ballade* and 'some ravishing piano pieces'. I do not believe that these two versions tell us everything. Whether Proust mentions them or not we must take into account other works he heard before or during his work on *A la recherche*. However, we can be sure that among the works of Fauré with which Proust was so long 'in love' one or another helped to create the visions of the 'little phrase'. Described in supple, flowing sentences (admirably reproduced in Scott-Moncrieff's translation), they catch, in the very cadences of this beautiful prose, something of the spirit of Fauré:

Even when he [Swann] was not thinking of the little phrase it existed, latent in his mind, in the same way as certain other conceptions without material equivalent, such as our notions of light, of sound, of perspective, of bodily desire, the rich possessions wherewith our inner temple is diversified and adorned. Perhaps we shall lose them, perhaps they will be obliterated, if we return to nothing in the dust. But as long as we are alive, we can no more bring ourselves to a state in which we shall not have known them than we can with regard to any material object, than we can, for example, doubt the luminosity of a lamp that has just been lighted, in view of the changed aspect of everything in the room, from which has vanished even the memory of the darkness.

We cannot compare the gentle art of Fauré, with its soft contours and subtle half-tones, with Proust's fertilizing work of genius. Proust had been continuously inspired by Fauré, but for his own very different ends: the scope and depth of *A la recherche* takes us far away from Fauré's rose-coloured musings. Yet there is an aspect of Fauré's work, and of one work in particular,

the *Requiem*, reviving forgotten memories and written in the belief that love's conflicts can be resolved only in death, that does in spirit belong to the world of Proust. The history of Fauré's *Requiem*, written to mark the death of his father, reaches back into an obscure but critical period in Fauré's youth. A period of some five years, in which Fauré was desperately courting the youngest daughter of the singer Pauline Viardot, ended in 1877 in what his son described as 'the greatest sentimental crisis of his life'. Five years earlier Fauré was introduced to the family of Pauline Viardot, sister of Malibran, mistress of Turgenev (whom Fauré in his correspondence with the Viardots calls his 'godfather'), and one of the most arresting musical personalities of her time. Marianne, her youngest daughter, closely attached to Turgenev, eventually consented to become Fauré's fiancée, but half-heartedly one gathers ('I told Turgenev', Fauré writes, 'that I should be happy if you loved me a quarter as much as you do him'), and after a few months she broke off the engagement to marry a minor composer, Victor Duvernoy.

Fauré long remained deeply wounded, perhaps permanently so. In later life he declared that he had nothing to regret in his rupture with Marianne, for he believed that the Viardots would eventually have succeeded in turning him away from his true vocation for chamber music, songs, and piano music. I think this is only half the truth. Camille Bellaigue suggests that despite its sacred text, the tender, almost amorous *Requiem*, written eleven years after the rupture, in 1888, is in the form of a nostalgic prayer to the still idolized Marianne. Musically, this theory is entirely acceptable: Fauré's work is the least fierce of *Requiem*s, the most friendly. And indeed, it is entirely in keeping with the poetic psychology of human relationships as understood by Proust that the death of Fauré's father should itself revivify repressed memories of a youthful love rejected. It thus comes about that this delicate *Requiem*, all hushes and sighs, is in effect an *A la recherche de l'amour perdu*. 'Is this gentle prayer even addressed to a departed one?' Bellaigue asks. 'I feel it to be rather addressed to the faithless one, now long forgiven. . . . Voices sing "Dona eis, give them, rest"; but it is *ei*, in the singular and the feminine, to her, that I hear them sing'.



# Inter-Regional Bridge Competition—XI

By HAROLD FRANKLIN and TERENCE REESE



THE SECOND heat of the home countries group in the inter-regional competition was a match between the East of Scotland and Wales. The East of Scotland was represented by Dr. J. G. Shearer and Dr. J. L. Allan, and Wales by Mr. S. E. Machray and Dr. J. L. Butler.

The players began by answering this question on play:

WEST	EAST
♠ 9 7 4	♠ 8
♥ Q J 10 7 5 3	♥ A 9
♦ 4	♦ A Q 10 9 5 3
♣ 6 5 4	♣ A K Q 9

West is declarer in Five Hearts. North leads the ace of spades and follows with the jack of diamonds. How should West plan the play?

The declarer's problem here is to force out the king of hearts while he still has control of the spade situation. He can win with the ace of diamonds, trump a diamond, and finesse the 9 of hearts. If South can take this he will play a low diamond and West will have to trump high to avoid being over-trumped. Then a heart can be led to the ace, but by this time West will be running short of trumps and the king of diamonds still has to be forced out.

The best line is to go up with the ace of diamonds and play the 9 of hearts from dummy. If the king is played by the defenders there will still be the ace of hearts in dummy as protection against a spade lead. It should be possible later to draw trumps and lead the queen of diamonds from dummy, playing South for the king.

If the 9 of hearts is allowed to hold at trick 2, then declarer should play off the ace and follow with a high diamond as before. This play may fail if North has three hearts to the king and holds off the first heart lead.

The answers to this problem left Wales in the lead by 5 points to 1. In the bidding test that followed, the Scots made up ground, and the scores were level at 16 each when the two pairs in turn were invited to bid the following hands, dealt by East at game to East-West:

WEST	EAST
♠ Q 9 4 2	♠ —
♥ 4	♥ A K J 10 9 3
♦ A K Q J 8 4	♦ 9
♣ A 8	♣ K Q 10 9 5 3

A grand slam is a fair proposition and Seven Diamonds is slightly better than Seven Clubs. In Seven Clubs a diamond lead is awkward for

East as it cuts him off from dummy's suit. The Scottish pair bid as follows:

WEST	EAST
Dr. Shearer	Dr. Allan
—	2H
4D	4S
5C	7H
7N.T.	

There was a complete misunderstanding in connexion with the first response of Four Diamonds. Dr. Shearer meant it to show a solid suit of diamonds, but his partner read it as a control-showing bid, confirming hearts. Thus they were at cross-purposes for the rest of the auction.

The Welsh pair won their way to the arena final with this bidding:

WEST	EAST
Mr. Machray	Dr. Butler
—	2H
3D	4C
4D	6C
7C	No

East's Six Clubs was bold, as the hands might have been a misfit. However, the call made it easy for his partner, whose ace of clubs was so far undisclosed, to bid the grand slam.

—Network Three



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# ABOUT THE HOUSE

## Danish Rissoles

FOR FOUR PERSONS you will need:

- 1 red cabbage
- 1 tablespoon of redcurrant juice
- 1 tablespoon of vinegar
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 lb. of minced veal
- 1 lb. of minced pork
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon of flour
- 1 gill of milk
- 1 onion
- salt and pepper to taste

Slice the red cabbage with a sharp knife and put it in a pressure cooker, if you have one. Add the redcurrant juice, vinegar, sugar, and salt. Cook for 8-10 minutes. (If you use an ordinary saucepan, cook slowly for 1½ hours.)

Mix the minced meat and the egg in a bowl. Make a paste of the milk and flour and mix this in also, together with a chopped onion, and pepper and salt to taste. Heat a mixture of butter and margarine in a pan and fry spoonfuls of the meat mixture in this until they are nicely brown—about 1½ minutes on each side. Make a sauce by adding thickening and colouring to the fat in the pan. Serve the rissoles, garnished with the cabbage and the sauce, with boiled potatoes.

—'Continental Cookery' (B.B.C. Television)

## Dandelion Wine

Dandelion wine has a characteristic bitter flavour. I like it as an aperitif before a meal; and although preferring it stronger than most of my home-made wines I do not like it too strong. Too much alcohol in home-made wines is a common

fault and should be avoided. Dandelion wine can be dry, slightly sweet, or very sweet—I like to make mine slightly sweet.

Avoid picking flowers from busy roadsides or the wine may taste of diesel oil. For a strongly flavoured wine use the whole flowers; for a more delicate one use only the yellow petals. Here are the ingredients:

- 3 quarts of freshly picked flowers, loosely packed—do not press them down
- 1 gallon of boiling water
- 3 lb. of white sugar
- 2 lemons
- 1 teaspoon of yeast

Pour the boiling water over the flowers, stir well and leave for two days, stirring from time to time. Strain off the flowers and gently squeeze out the liquor they contain. Add the juice of two lemons and the thin-peeled rind of one. Bring very nearly to the boil and add the sugar, stirring well to dissolve it, and make up the volume to one gallon.

Spread the yeast on a piece of hard toast and float on top of the liquor in an open vessel, such as a plastic or enamel bucket. If kept in a warm place it will soon start to ferment. When the fermentation is going well, transfer to a large bottle, such as a one-gallon glass demi-john, and let the liquor foam over and get rid of impurities. Top it up from time to time with spare wine, or even water, to keep the vessel full. When fermentation has stopped give a final topping up, bung down securely, and store in a cool place.

In October, or the first cold weather, put the wine into its final bottles, adding a small lump of sugar to each bottle if after tasting it you feel it needs it. Lightly boil the corks before using them. Remember to have everything very

clean for your wine-making. Keep dandelion wine for at least a year before drinking it—and longer is better, as the quality improves with age. I have some twenty years old which is delicious.

GEORGE ORDISH

—'Woman's Hour' (Home Service)

## Notes on Contributors

ROLAND BERGER (page 951): Director of the British Council for the Promotion of International Trade

MARK PRESTWICH (page 953): Senior Lecturer in History and Political Studies, Natal University; formerly Editor, *The Natal Witness*

SIR ERIC ASHBY (page 959): Master of Clare College, Cambridge University; President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University, Belfast, 1950-59; author of *Science and the People*, *Technology and the Academics*, etc.

ANTONY FLEW (page 963): Professor of Philosophy, University College of North Staffordshire; author of *A New Approach to Psychological Research*; editor of *Essays in Logic and Language*, etc.

EDWARD HYAMS (page 965): author of *The Grape Vine in England*, *Strawberry Cultivation*, *The Slaughterhouse Informer*, *Taking it Easy*, etc.

CHRISTOPHER RICKS (page 967): Lecturer in English, Oxford University

C. DAY LEWIS, C.B.E. (page 970): Professor of Poetry, Oxford University, 1951-56; author of *A Hope for Poetry*, etc.

MICHAEL AYRTON (page 972): painter, sculptor, theatre designer, and illustrator; author of *British Drawings*, *Golden Sections*, etc.

EDWARD LOCKSPEISER (page 985): critic and musicologist; author of *Debussy*, *French Musical Writing*, etc.

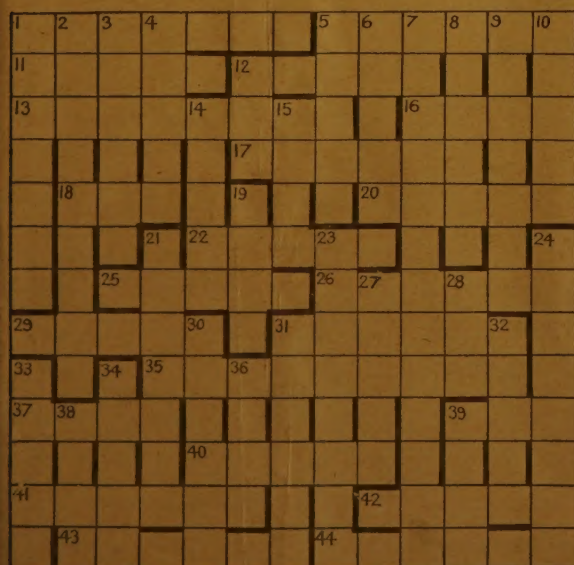
## Crossword No. 1,618.

## Test-paper.

## By Nut.

Prizes (for the first three correct solutions opened): book tokens, value 30s., 21s., and 12s. 6d. respectively

Closing date: first post on Thursday, June 8. Entries should be on the printed diagram and envelopes containing them should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1, marked 'Crossword' in the left-hand top corner. In all matters connected with the crosswords the Editor's decision is final



All across lights are, or have been, connected with 7D, 1D. Punctuation in clues should be ignored.

### CLUES—ACROSS

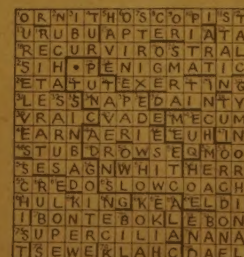
1. Mister Crack, pedlar (7)
5. Find the outer court by going round the French wing (6)
11. One outcome of no war is the appearance of this tree (5)
12. Such an owl is always feminine (5)
13. One unbending mentally and, presumably, physically (8)
16. Scots pinch from it at Easter (4)
17. This bridge is the beginning of the end of a famous race (6)
18. Possibly hapless maid (3)
20. Up-end a lager, remove some of the body, and only sediment remains (5)
22. Bored and Bored, according to Byron, each form a mighty one (5)
25. Scramble 19D, and O for the fish! (5)
26. He adds to charges and charges pieces (6)
29. Short Greek pilaster without a concession (5)
31. Breed of cattle, not at all sinister (6)
35. Anonymous love message (9)
37. Grieve, in part dishonestly (4)
39. Coin initially of small Eastern nation (3)
40. Wordsworth was one (5)
41. Horse transport owner (6)
42. Old guard (5)
43. Did this keep a 1D. from jumping too far from the fire-side? (6)
44. Intermediary between farmer and baker (6)

### DOWN

2. Counting the days and hours (9)
3. Who takes this must be undone in The Beggar's Opera (1, 5)

4. Namby-pamby, though a blue of sorts (5)
5. Dull sounding South Africans (5)
6. It's frightening when feet are off the ground (5)
8. Pasture meadow first, then plant seed (6)
9. Force out of context. Rude behaviour! (7)
10. Old split found in any rented house (5)
12. Pout with Tucker (3)
14. Purchase tax in the ocean enclosures (5)
15. American tree breaks up a republican legislature (4)
19. Waggish principal associating with bishop and friend alike (4)
21. Religious association to study expression (7)
23. Spaniel with Marlburian associations (8)
24. Schoolboys at 1D. might use the word sneak (8)
27. Domestic animal thrice provides support under the arm (5)
28. Study light gig: no trap here (3)
30. Anything topped in the kitchen is usually this (6)
31. With a double in front this reveals the normal bus-decorator (6)
32. Steer awry and horses baulk in Scotland (5)
33. Fashionable article this dye stuff (5)
34. Common noise in the stillness of the night (5)
36. Though mostly grey, he is notoriously inexact (4)
38. Young animal metamorphosed into Norwegian hero (4)
39. Strain back: products of 36D. (4)

## Solution of No. 1,616



1st prize: Lady Bedson (Hove); 2nd prize: Miss R. L. Saw (Carshalton); 3rd prize: Mrs. E. Grist (Salfords)

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